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WEEK ENDING DECEMBER 20, 1906.

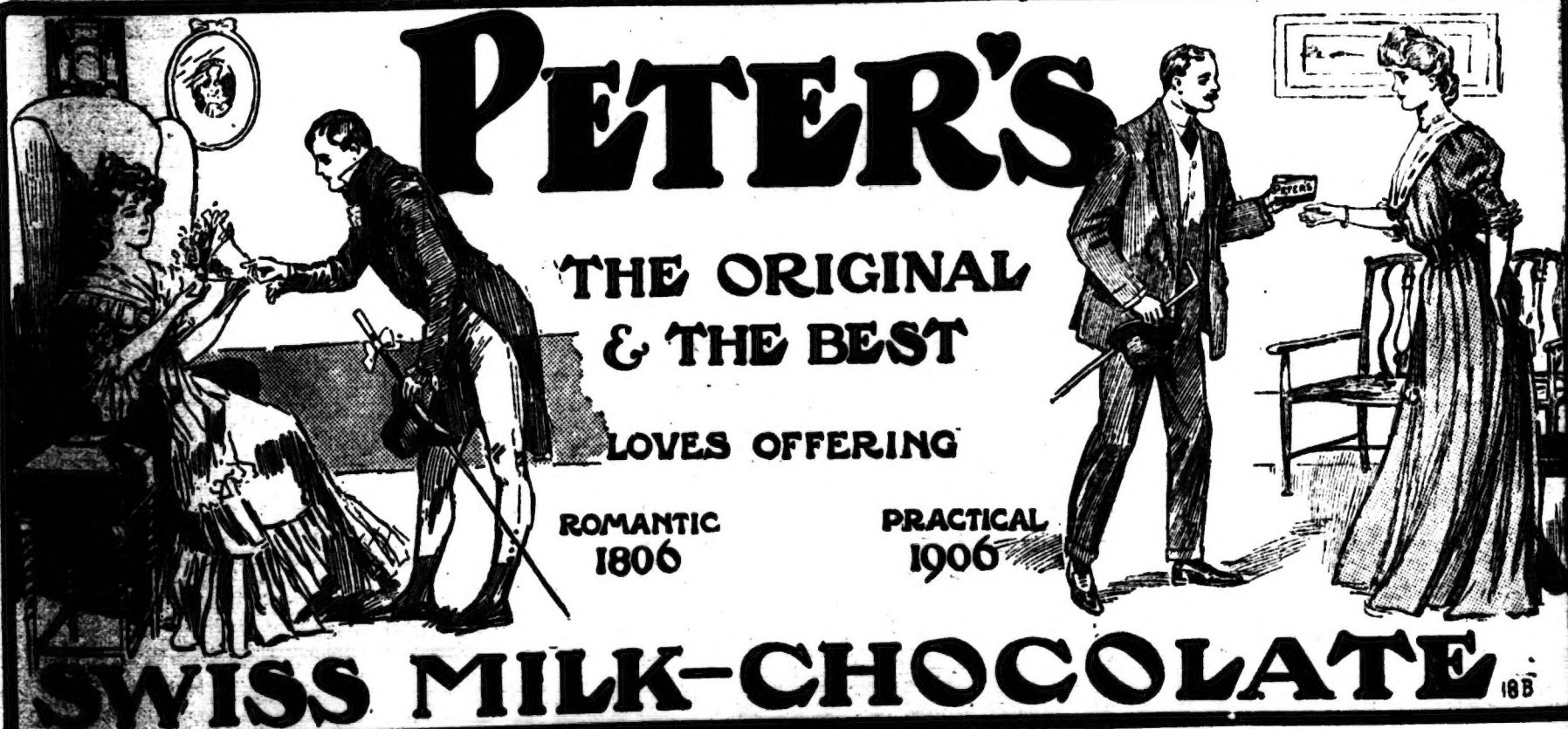
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To Smokers
MAKE YOUR OWN CIGARETTE, SIR:
IT IS TWICE AS GOOD

AG Paper

BEST & PUREST.
LARGEST SALE IN GREAT BRITAIN.

Ladies' High-class, Second-hand Clothing
Suits, the latest styles—Madame Dupont, Wood Green,
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The F. H. A. Golden Company's Fashionable
and profitable sales to all ladies. They have raised in
every instance—especially in a few months. They
have the latest styles in ladies' high-class
suits, and are now offering to ladies a large stock
of high-class, second-hand clothing, which they
have just received from the London stores. They
are now offering to ladies a large stock of high-class,
second-hand clothing, which they have just received
from the London stores. They are now offering to
ladies a large stock of high-class, second-hand
clothing, which they have just received from the
London stores.

Clothes and Grocery Store from
London. They have a large stock of high-class,
second-hand clothing, which they have just received
from the London stores. They are now offering to
ladies a large stock of high-class, second-hand
clothing, which they have just received from the
London stores.

Paterson's Cashmere—Genuine Cashmere
Suits, the latest styles—Madame Dupont, Wood Green,
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Five Pounds for work done by five persons
in the London stores. They have a large stock of
high-class, second-hand clothing, which they have
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clothing, which they have just received from the
London stores.

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CHRISTMAS DOUBLE NUMBER OF PEARSONS WEEKLY

SHOULD WE KISS UNDER THE MISTLETOE?

MISS TOSPY SINDEN.

I like to see plenty of both kissing and mistletoe about at Christmas time. That sprig of mistletoe hanging from the centre of the room or hall causes a heap of fun, and if at a Christmas gathering an unsuspecting lady is caught beneath it she could hardly be cross at such a time, for, of course, you must expect something of that sort if you see mistletoe hanging about.

Topsy Sinden

THE CANTANKEROUS CRANK.

I may be a bit of a crank, but I am, nevertheless, a man, and in face of Miss Agnes Fraser's reply I can only say that I should like to have talked the matter over with her alone, but on asking for her letter to use as credentials, the Sub-Editor informed me that the Editor had taken the letter away "for his wife's scrap-book!" What base frauds these Editors are. He evidently believed in the "Do It Now" motto.

THE HEART SPECIALIST.

No, I am afraid that on the whole, I don't quite approve of this custom. Of course I know that it is an old one, and my objections are mainly based on sanitary grounds. Still, circumstances alter cases!

Mlle. ADELINÉ GENÉE.

Why not? I only regret I do not get the chance. We must do all we can to keep up old customs, and I think this a fine old English custom; in fact, in late years it has been adopted in my native country, Denmark.

Adeline Genée

MISS GERTIE MILLAR.

Certainly not. Mistletoe is never hung in sufficiently secluded places.

Gertie Millar

MR. P. DOUBLEYOU.

I am very young you know. I have no opinion of my own upon this subject. I have to do what I am told. If the Editor said to me: "Look here—there is a sprig of mistletoe, and here is a young and winsome lady. Lead her under the mistletoe and kiss her"—well, if he said this, it would be my duty to obey him, and when duty sternly points I am not the man to hesitate.

MISS KITTY MASON.

Kiss at all times, as much as you can, and whenever you can. Mistletoe makes no difference, to my idea, so long as it is the right person.

Kitty Mason

MISS BILLIE BURKE.

I think it all depends upon circumstances, which you may spell M.-A.-N if you like.

Given the right "circumstances," what could be more delightful or more reasonable than a kiss under the mistletoe?

Of course, the "circumstances" may be wrong, but I don't think much of the girl who cannot so arrange matters that they are absolutely right when she is "surprised" under the mistletoe.

Billie Burke

MISS CAMILLE CLIFFORD.

I think that a kiss under the mistletoe is very jolly. The old-fashioned ways should be kept up. I don't mean that any old thing should kiss me even under the mistletoe, but all "nice" men know that it means good-fellowship. I have no regard for the puritanical idea that kissing is wrong. There are kisses—and kisses.

Camille Clifford

MR. NOTEBOOK.

Mr. Notebook's advice to those in doubt,

CHANCE IT!



Who is now Delighting Audiences in the Provinces.

A step behind caused her to hurriedly dry her eyes. Her maid was beside her.

"If you please, m'm, there's somebody wishes to speak to you—in the library—a gentleman." The woman paused impressively, an inscrutable expression on her face.

"What is his name?" asked Marjorie, without looking up.

"He wouldn't give John any name, m'm."

"Very well, I'll go down," answered Marjorie in a bored tone which deceived neither the maid nor herself. She ran in her room to remove the traces of tears from her eyes, and a few moments later stood on the threshold of the library, a little slight figure in pink muslin; someone in the room turned at the closing of the door.

"Marjorie!"

"Nigel!"

He advanced towards her, then suddenly stopped, while they looked silently into each other's eyes.

Then Marjorie held out her hands. "You've come back, Nigel—at last," she said gently.

For answer he bent his head, and passionately kissed the little hands extended to him. Then he seemed to remember something, and his manner altered slightly. "I came to bring this back," he said; "you dropped it yesterday in my hansom."

"My bracelet!" said Marjorie simply. "I would not have lost it, Nigel, for all the world; why?"—she broke off laughing—"I had just written out a reward of five pounds for the finder—that's a lot, you know, out of my quarter's allowance."

"Marjorie, is it possible that—"

"That I've not forgotten you—why Nigel, I promised." There was a world of reproach in the tone, and the man covered his face with his hand.

"Come and sit on the sofa, dear, and tell me everything," said Marjorie gently.

"There's nothing much to tell," said Nigel, in a voice not quite steady, "only that I am a worthless brute—that I've no right to be sitting here with you—"

"Hush!" interrupted Marjorie; "only tell me what happened."

"It was my own fault," answered Nigel. "I was always getting into debt—racing debts—a poor devil like me with nothing but his allowance and expectations had no business to bet so heavily; my uncle paid my debts twice."

"I know," said Marjorie softly.

"The third time we quarrelled; he cut me off, and I went under without even money to get to the Colonies. I was pretty desperate, Marjorie, I believe it was only the thought of you that kept me from going under altogether. "You know," smiling ruefully, "I was always fond of horses—too fond, I suppose—that's why I took to my present work. I haven't done so badly, the present goes my own," he added.

Tears welled into Marjorie's eyes as he finished speaking.

"Nigel, dear, can nothing be done?" she asked desperately.

"Nothing, dear," he answered. "I must peg away at my present job; it's not inconceivable, really, and you must not fret for me, Marjorie."

"But your uncle?"

"He may relent on his death-bed, but it's unlikely; we must hope for nothing from that quarter."

A blush rose to Marjorie's cheeks at the use of the double pronoun.

"If anything should happen, dear, I'll let you know at once," he said, rising as a clock in the distance chimed the hour of six. "I must go—on duty," he added, with a difficult smile.

"Oh, Nigel, you'll come back!"

"I'll try to, dear. Heaven knows I hate leaving you, but we must hope for the best." Then he took her face in his two hands. "Good-bye, dear, dear little girl," he said, "whatever happens the memory of this day will carry me through my life." He kissed her with sudden passion, and was gone.

For an instant Marjorie stood where he had left her, then, sobbing bitterly, she flung herself down on the sofa. And it was thus her aunt discovered her five minutes later.

"Good heavens, child, what's the matter?" cried Lady Agatha, to whom tears were a crime.

There was no answer, and something in the despair of the girl's attitude caused her to cross the room and lay her hand kindly on the ruffled hair. "What is it, my dear?" she asked. And Marjorie, overwrought, touched by the unusual action, told her everything, from the parting by the river to the meeting just now.

Lady Agatha listened in silence, gently patting her niece's hand, and once, just once, something glinted in her eyes.

The story was told at last, and Lady Agatha resumed her usual manner.

"My dear, you're an extremely silly child," she said, "and my best advice to you is to try and put this absolutely impossible young man out of your mind at once."

"But, Aunt Agatha," gasped Marjorie, "you remember Nigel Milward, and you know he's not impossible."

"He's made himself so, at any rate," said her aunt; "so there was someone else all along," she added to herself.

"Of course there was, did you never guess?" said Marjorie. "Oh, auntie, was there never anyone else in your day?" she asked innocently.

"Certainly not," snapped her aunt with a sudden flush, "or if there were we invariably had the good sense not to think about them, and neither must you; now run upstairs and try and get presentable for dinner; Sir Roger Blake is dining with us, and I never saw you looking so plain."

Thus dismissed, Marjorie walked dejectedly upstairs.

Lady Agatha remained where she was. "Marjorie," she said half-aloud, "Marjorie and Nigel Milward—how utterly foolish—and yet he's been plucky over it, working like that, and so has she—yes, so has Marjorie, poor child. If only his uncle would come round; but he won't, and my niece cannot marry a hansom cab driver—poor Marjorie—and yet if I leave her my money"—she hesitated, then suddenly moved to the writing-table—"it's worth trying," she continued, "it would make them so happy, and if I make Marjorie my heiress perhaps Geoffrey may relent—and if he does, why, it will be as fine a match as any I've planned."

She took up a pen; "it's worth trying, and Geoffrey may relent—for my sake, for the sake of the past."

Lady Agatha's face was very soft as she bent over the paper. She wrote for some time, and, as she went down to dinner, slipped a rather thick letter into the post-bag. It was addressed to:

SIR GEOFFREY MILWARD, BART.,
Milward Close,
Hinton, Leicestershire.

It was Christmas Eve, and outside everything was clad in a thick mantle of snow. Marjorie, pale-faced and tired, was sitting alone at breakfast (Lady Agatha never appeared till twelve), when a telegram was brought into her.

What was this—the paper danced before her eyes.

"Am with my uncle—coming to see you to-night.—Nigel."

How Marjorie got through the day she never knew, her feet seemed to tread on air. She would not tell her aunt, the news would spoil in telling, and, oh, she was so happy!

Funnily enough, Lady Agatha seemed in a marvellously good temper, and not once in the day did she remember to rebuke Marjorie for anything.

In the afternoon it snowed harder than ever, and, as the weather was uninviting in the extreme, Marjorie and her aunt had tea alone in the drawing-room.

"Marjorie," said Lady Agatha, pausing with the teapot in her hand, and a twinkle in her eyes which her niece did not see, "I'm glad to see you appear to have come to a more reasonable frame of mind as regards that young Milward. If you only knew how much better bright eyes and colour became you than a pasty face, and ridiculous tears!"

She paused, and Marjorie felt that she was being complimented on her appearance.

"I do feel brighter to-day, Aunt Agatha."

"And about time too," said her aunt; "and now, without any more ado, I wish to tell you, my dear, that I have arranged a marriage for you which—"

Marjorie dropped her spoon in her saucer with a clatter.

"But—what?" she gasped, "oh, I really can't, besides, I—I hate him."

"May I ask who?" inquired Lady Agatha.

"Sir Roger Blake," cried poor Marjorie, nearly in tears.

"For once you are wrong," said her aunt, "and, anyhow, my plans are made—a girl who cannot properly make up her own mind, must have it made up for her—I intend you to marry—"

"Mr. Nigel Milward," announced the footman, ringing open the door.

Marjorie sprang to her feet, Lady Agatha no less quickly.

"Let me get away," she cried in a whisper, stumbling over a footstool and making for a door at the other end of the room. In passing she hurriedly laid her hand on Marjorie's. "Make the most of your time," she whispered, "and—God bless you, my dear."

Then she disappeared just as Nigel, radiant with good news, came in upon the astounded Marjorie.

"It's all right, dear," he cried, taking her two hands in his; "he's relent—I'm forgiven—oh, Marjorie, darling, it's too good to be true."

"But, Nigel, how did it happen?" cried the bewildered Marjorie.

"How?" I don't know, dear. He's been ill, poor old chap, and perhaps his illness softened him—anyhow, he sent for me yesterday. We had a long talk, Marjorie—he was awfully decent—said he thought work had improved me. Then I told him about you, and he's awfully keen on you, dear, although he's not seen you. He said he knew your aunt years ago, and, indeed, if you were half as fine a woman as she was, and a lot of not like that, because, of course, you're much finer, darling."

Marjorie smiled; but a sudden light broke in on her.

"Aunt Agatha's a darling!" she cried.

"I'm sure she's a brick if you say so," said Nigel. Then he added: "I'm going to say good-bye to my old gee to-night, she's done me many a good turn, but the last was the best, for it brought me back to you." He suddenly caught sight of the gold bracelet on Marjorie's wrist.

"Marjorie," he said, bending over her, "I found this for you, may I claim my reward?"

Marjorie looked up blushing and laughing. "What, the five pounds?" she asked.

"No—yourself."

"You should claim something harder to give," said Marjorie.

And upstairs in her boudoir, Lady Agatha Delamare sat alone, re-reading a letter she had received that morning.

"So Geoffrey has relented," she said. "I thought he would—for my sake—and those two young things are happy. I suppose. That was a well-timed entry of Nigel's—couldn't have fallen out better. Well, well—God bless my soul, what a stupid old woman I am!"

And she angrily wiped away a tear which had fallen on her hand.

Ada Reeve

LADY AGATHA DELAMARE was not in the best of tempers, in fact she was distinctly put out. It was a cold December day, her head ached, it had come on to rain the very instant she had sent the carriage home; her pretty niece, Marjorie Adair, had been carrying on a marked flirtation with a charming, but penniless, undergraduate cousin, while, to crown all, at her other side sat Sir Roger Blake, the most eligible bachelor in town!

So there was a decided sharpness in Lady Agatha's tone as she bid the penniless cousin hail a hansom, reserving one of her suavest smiles to thank the eligible Sir Roger for his hospitality.

Archibald Gardiner, philosophically reflecting that it is the lot of poor relations to be told to hail hansoms, and make themselves generally useful, comforted himself by squeezing Marjorie's pretty fingers, as he handed her in after her perturbed aunt.

Marjorie, for her part, summoned a like mood of philosophy to assist her during the lecture she most plainly foresaw. It exploded as soon as the hansom doors were shut.

"May I ask, Marjorie," inquired Lady Delamare, "if you are the heiress to a fortune of which I know nothing? because, if such is the case, I can call your conduct this afternoon by no other name than positively improvident; here I put myself to the trouble of chaperoning you to the hateful tea-shop at Sir Roger's kind invitation, and just because that horrid young Gardiner turns up you choose—"

Here the flow of eloquence was ruthlessly interrupted by the opening of the trap-door, and a voice asking, "where to, m'am?"

"Tell him 'home,'" said Lady Delamare with asperity.

Marjorie looked up, "209 Cadogan Square," she said. The trap-door was shut sharply, and Lady Agatha, revived by the interruption, took fresh breath and continued:

"As I was saying, your conduct is positively improvident; do you imagine, I wonder, that I derive any great pleasure in carting about an unmarried girl, with not a sixpence to bless herself, and so utterly careless of the future as you have proved yourself to be this afternoon! Why is it, Marjorie," she concluded, turning to look at her niece, "that you—gracious child," she added in a kinder tone, "you look as white as a sheet, what's the matter?"

"Nothing, Aunt Agatha," answered Marjorie. "I'm all right—but it's so very close—I—I shall be glad to get home."

"You look as if you were going to faint," said her aunt; "take my smelling-salts, dear; there, that's better."

"Yes, thank you," gasped Marjorie, trying to hide her indisposition as well as she could.

Five minutes more brought them to Cadogan Square, and it may have been the fact that Marjorie was not herself which prevented her noticing that a pretty gold bracelet she always wore had caught in the lace of her dress, and, disentangling itself, fell unobserved to the rug at their feet.

The hansom drew up at No. 209, the door opened, and Lady Agatha passed into the hall.

The man walked his horse slowly down the square, and, turning as he did so, looked back to the door he had just quitted. The girl he had driven turned also and looked at him.

It was drawing towards five o'clock on the following afternoon, and Marjorie, having pleaded headache as an excuse for not accompanying her aunt calling, sat alone on the pretty balcony of her boudoir overlooking the Square gardens. She had been writing, and now paused to read what she had written.

"25 reward. Lost, on the 3rd instant, probably in a hansom driving between Bond Street and Cadogan Square, a plain gold bracelet, with pearl heart attached. Whoever returns the same to 209 Cadogan Square will receive the above reward."

"I think that will do," she said to herself; "I do hope I dropped it in the hansom. Oh, Nigel!"

Tears welled up in her eyes, tears for the memory of one summer day two years ago, when love which had just come whispering to her was ruthlessly hurried out of her life for ever.

There had, indeed, been no formal engagement—only that mutual understanding, which to lovers is perhaps the most delightful state of all. But Nigel Milward was young, and had all the wild blood of youth in his veins—and the day dawned when he had to tell Marjorie that he must go away because he was ruined.

They parted at the end of a long garden sloping to the river, and, before they said good-bye, he fastened a little gold bracelet on her wrist. "Don't forget me, Marjorie," he whispered, as passionately he kissed her pale lips. "He could ask no more; his position was too hopeless, but to live in the heart and memory of such a girl as Marjorie was something."

"I will never forget you," she answered earnestly. And this was why Lady Agatha Delamare manoeuvred in vain to get her wayward niece married—and this was the cause of the "headache" which kept Marjorie this afternoon a lonely girl on the balcony of her room.

THE CHRISTMAS TURKEY How to Choose, Cook and Carve It.

I.—HOW TO CHOOSE IT.

HAN birds are better than cock, and those of a moderate weight, from 14lb. to 20lb., than the monsters which tip the beam at 25lb. to 30lb. The best birds come from Norfolk, their superiority over all others being due to some peculiar virtue in Norfolk soil and water, especially the latter. The next best come from Cambridge and Suffolk. In choosing a turkey there are three main points to look to:

- (1) The feet.
- (2) The skin.
- (3) The breast-bone.

The first named should be as black as night, red feet being a sign of old age. The skin should be fine, clear, and white, absence of these qualities denoting an inferior or aged bird.

But the supreme test of a turkey's youth is to be found in the breast-bone, or, rather, in the soft cartilage in which, in a young bird, the bone terminates.

In an old bird this soft cartilage has vanished, or, rather, become bone. Foreign birds are imported in increasingly large numbers every year, and are becoming increasingly difficult to distinguish from English turkeys, as they have been so crossed with English breeds that they have, to a great extent, lost their native characteristics, French turkeys, for example, having no longer excessively long legs.

The best guarantee of obtaining a first-class English bird is to deal with a first-class tradesman, and to be willing to give the price he demands.

The housewife who wants a Norfolk turkey for 10d. a pound invites fraud and disappointment.

II.—HOW TO COOK IT.

A.—PLAIN ENGLISH FASHION.

By Mr. THOMAS DAVEY, for forty years Chef at Simpson's famous restaurant in the Strand, where Mr. Davey cooks daily for 1,500 people.

The ideal way to roast a turkey is on a spit before an open fire, but the majority of people now use gas-stoves, and, provided proper care is taken, there is no reason why the result should not be satisfactory, and the bird free from that gassy flavour which is so undesirable.

The stove should be kept scrupulously clean, and to test its being in thorough order look at the colour

of the flame when lighted. This should be blue, for if yellow it shows that the combustion is imperfect, and you will get the gassy taste you wish to avoid.

Before the turkey is introduced into the oven the gas should have been lighted for at least ten minutes beforehand. This is an important point, often overlooked by beginners.

In cooking a joint a strong heat is desirable at first, but not so with turkey, and the temperature should be kept fairly even throughout. For a turkey of 14lb. allow two and a half hours, and a quarter of an hour for every 2lb. extra.

Much, if not, indeed, everything, depends upon constant and plentiful basting. It is a mistake to suppose that a turkey cooked in a gas-stove requires less basting than one before a fire.

An important point in connection with basting is to have a proper basting spoon—as long as you can get. To attempt basting with an ordinary spoon is to court loss of temper, scorched face and hands, and burnt turkey.

Stuffing: Equal proportions of pork sausage-meat and veal stuffing—from 1½lb. upwards, according to the size of the bird.

The flavour will be greatly improved by the addition of marjoram, chopped shallot, and about 1lb. of blanched chestnuts, whilst to bring out the very finest flavour of the bird there is nothing like chopped ham or Bath chap.

Finally, before putting the bird in the oven cover it with well-buttered paper, to prevent cracking and ensure an even distribution of the heat, and, above all, remember that constant and plentiful basting means success.

B.—DINDONNEAU À LA ROYALE.

By Monsieur ESCOFFIER, of the Carlton Hotel.

STUFF a fine young turkey with black truffles which have been peeled and slowly cooked in butter. Season to taste, and add a glass of old Madeira wine.

Roast the turkey on a spit, arranging that it shall be cooked exactly at the moment that it has to be served. A quarter of an hour before the final moment roast quickly some fine fat quails, one for each diner, and, at the last few minutes, toss the same number of scallops of fresh foie gras in butter. The turkey, the quails, and the scallops must be served separately, and very hot.

With them serve a sauce-boat of exquisite turkey gravy.

At this point the head waiter has to fulfil a very important part. To ensure the final success and quick-serving of this "Royal Roast," the head waiter must have three helpers, a table with a chafing dish, and very hot plates.

The fillets of turkey are then cut into scallops, and on each plate the head waiter places a scallop of turkey, a truffle, a scallop of foie gras, a quail, and a small spoonful of turkey gravy.

The helpers then quickly pass the plates thus garnished to each diner.

C.—ANOTHER WAY.

By Monsieur TREPOD, of the Savoy Hotel.

You can prepare a turkey or a goose, according to your means and your purse. Let us put truffles and foie gras out of the question. One can prepare a turkey in the following way:

Make ready and clean a turkey in any way you like; chop up some onion and the turkey's liver, broil it for a little time with butter, adding to it 1lb. of pork fat. Cook some chestnuts with a piece of celery, twenty-four small sausages, chopped parsley, salt, pepper, four spices; mix all up together, and then stuff your turkey, roasting it for about two hours, taking care to collect the gravy.

STUFFED GOOSE.

GET ready a young and tender goose, and stuff it in the following way:

Plenty of apples cut up, cooked in butter; add to this a glass of good champagne, salt, pepper, four spices, and let it half-cook, adding currants the while; then stuff the bird, and roast it for about one hour and a half; collect the gravy.

Serve with it potatoes mashed in butter.

III.—HOW TO CARVE IT.

KEEP cool. Do not dismember the turkey as you would a chicken, but treat it as a joint. That is to say, carve equally from the breast, the legs, and the wings, helping each person to a portion from each of those parts. In this way everybody will be served alike, and no one will be inconvenienced with the presence of an enormous leg or wing on his plate. Keep cool.

"Fix going to have a fine time at Christmas," said Miss Kittish to Miss Frocks. "Mr. Huggins is to be there, and he is colour-blind, you know."

"Does his colour-blindness add to your enjoyment?"

"Well, he thinks all the holly berries are mistletoe."

IN DOUBT.

He was anxious to purchase a Christmas gift for his wife, and, as he liked pictures, and as the walls were rather bare, he soon hit upon the form which his present should take.

"Where shall I find something really nice in oils for the dining-room?" he asked of an assistant at the co-operative stores.

"On the third floor," began the assistant; then he paused and looked doubtfully at the inquirer. "Did you mean a painting, or something in the sardine line?" he asked.

MADE IT WORSE.

LAST Christmas a certain vicar was invited to a big dinner at the house of one of the leading men in the town. At the dinner-table he was placed opposite a goose.

The lady of the house was placed on the vicar's left. Seeing the goose, he remarked:

"Shall I sit so close to the goose?"

Finding his words a bit equivocal, he turned round to the lady and said, in a most inoffensive tone:

"Excuse me, Mrs. Blank; I meant the roast one."

BONNY: "Mother dear, what are you going to give me for Christmas?"

Mamma: "Oh, anything to keep you quiet, Bobby!"

Bobby: "Well, nothing will keep me quiet but a drum."

"Vixen well, Henry," said Mrs. Newbryde petulantly, "if you will go skating and you get drowned and are never heard of again, don't come running to me for sympathy."

HIS BUSY TIME.

Among the horny-handed daily bread-winners it is a proverb that the very hardest way to earn one's living is to serve a certain firm of parcel carriers, who start their yard at six a.m. to the tick, but have no fixed hour for closing.

As a worn-out human document crawled wearily through the gates at 6.10 on the morn of Christmas Eve, the lynx-eyed foreman dropped on to him:

"Aha! Peters, just spotted you, have I? Fined sixpence for being late."

"Chuck it, guv'nor; chuck it!" snarled Peters feebly. "I ain't knocked off from yesterday yet!"

In Case of Accident on Christmas Day.

WHEN THE LAMP FALLS OVER.



FIRE BRIGADES are always busy at Christmas time, and this is largely because people lose their heads just as soon as anything catches fire. It is very silly, because it's often so easy to quell an outbreak in its early stages. Somebody knocks the lamp over, we will say, and instantly the tablecloth catches fire. What must you do? Well, sand is the best thing to put out burning oil, but if this isn't available, get the family flour barrel, and throw the flour into the flames. It immediately subdues them.

A TOO ENERGETIC CRACKER.

It is not seldom happens that in pulling a Christmas cracker either a child gets its hand too near the business part of the cracker, or the explosion itself is unusually violent, with the result that the little hand gets a nasty burn. In this case vasoline or any oily substance applied relieves, so also does a little paste made of cornflour and water. Perhaps the quickest way to get rid of the sting is to hold the burnt fingers or hand in front of a hot fire, as close to the heat as can be borne. This has the effect of drawing out the pain, although it inflicts more at the actual time.



IN CASES OF CHOKING.



No matter how carefully you may train your children to eat with care, they will choke themselves sometimes, particularly if, during the Christmas dinner, they are hurrying up to get on to the next course. If they do, don't bang them on the back; it doesn't always work, and generally frightens the child. Put the finger far back in the mouth at the side of the root of the tongue, then use it as a kind of hook, and bring the food forward by it into the mouth. If a fish-bone causes the trouble, let the child swallow crusts, followed by gulps of water.

THE BURNING CHRISTMAS TREE.

FLECKED with cotton wool to resemble snow, and lighted with wee candles, nothing looks prettier than the children's Christmas tree, but it has often been the cause of disastrous fires at the festive season.

Should the Christmas tree catch fire what must one do? In the first place keep cool, then get the nearest rug, or, if the tree is not big, an old overcoat will do, and smother the tree.

Don't be afraid of a small burn, go right at it, and you will soon conquer the outbreak.



PEERS WHO RUN PUBS.

ANOTHER titled publican has just blossomed forth in the person of Sir Henry Echlin, landlord of the "Rose and Crown," Wooburn Green, who succeeded to the title as eighth baronet a few days back.

Of course, Sir Henry is not the first man with "a handle to his name" who has sold beer behind a bar. It is, indeed, not so very long ago since the old-fashioned "Falcon Inn," at Wycombe, was taken over by that aristocrat of aristocrats, the Hon. Sydney Vernon, son of the Dowager Lady Lyveden.

Lord de la Warr, again, and Lord Walsingham, have both held licenses in their own names; and although they did not, of course, actually serve their liquors with their own hands, they both took a very lively personal interest in their respective "houses."

Of other celebrities who have from time to time tried their luck as tavern proprietors, the name is legion. Miss Ellen Terry, for instance, once kept a wayside inn near Uxbridge; and the old Market House in Russell Street, Covent Garden, was "run" up till the very day of his tragic death by William Terris.

Arthur Roberts owns two or three inns in different parts of Devonshire. Miss Marie Lloyd was for some time proprietress of the Prince's Tavern, in Wardour Street. Constance Loseby, the old Gaiety favourite, was for many years landlady of the "Greyhound," at Dulwich.

Of parson publicans, too, there has been no lack, since the Bishop of Chester, some eight or nine years back, set to work to prove in person that the best way to "reform" the British working man was to sell him good beer, and not too much of it.

ALICE (to nervous suitor): "There is something about your figure that suggests a masterpiece of sculpture."

"Aw, how nice of you to say so. What is it?"
Alice (playfully): "You don't seem to have the use of your arms."

MR. SMART: "What a foolish habit you women have of carrying your purses in your hand in the street."

Mrs. Smart: "Oh, it's not foolish at all. You see our husbands give us so little to put in our purses that they're not worth *carrying*."

"Excuse me, old man," said Brown to Jones, "but there's something wrong with your hair, isn't there?"
"I should think there is," replied Jones; "it's this new shop-closing movement. Last night I went into the hairdresser's to get my hair cut, and seven o'clock struck when it was half done, and so I have to go about like this till to-morrow morning."

IRATE FATHER: "I'm getting tired of this nonsense. You've been engaged to that young man for six months. Does he ever intend to marry you?"

Daughter: "You must have patience, papa. Remember, he's an actor."
Irate Father: "What has that to do with it?"
Daughter: "He's fond of long engagements."

MASTODONS IN ALASKA.

THAT our acquaintance with the four-footed creatures of the world is not yet complete is proved by the recent discovery of the takin, an animal half ox and half antelope.

This curious mammal was found in the wilds of Northern Tibet by Mr. Claude White, C.I.E., British political agent at Sikim. Stories of its existence have filtered through to India in years past, but never before has any European set eyes upon it, much less secured a specimen.

It was much the same with the chup, which was discovered in 1901 by Sir Harry Johnston in the Semliki forest, Uganda. Most Europeans resident in the Protectorate had heard native tales about a large, shy mammal, related alike to the antelope and the giraffe, which was said to lurk in these vast, unexplored tracts of virgin woodland. But by most they were regarded merely as legends. It was reserved for Sir Harry to prove their absolute correctness.

White men in wild lands are usually either indifferent to, or sceptical of, these native yarns. Ever since Stanley's time, for instance, there have been rumours current of the existence in the Congo forest belt of a breed of giant pigs, the size of buffaloes, and very fierce. Yet it was not until a couple of years ago that Lieut. Meinertshagen, of the East African Rifles, succeeded in killing one of the creatures, and so demonstrating their existence to the world. The lieutenant presented both the skin and the skeleton to the South Kensington Museum, where they now are.

After this who shall say that the persistent native reports of the existence of mastodons in Northern Alaska are to be dismissed offhand as mere idle myths? That this immense hairy elephant must have lived there quite recently has been conclusively proved by the finding of dead specimens—hide, flesh, and all—frozen in the ice. A few stray ones may well have survived.

BOOKING THE ORDER.

ABOUT three weeks before Christmas several small boys were out singing carols, when they came to a house which they thought a likely place for a reward.

After singing for some time, the lady of the house came to the door, and told them that it was too early to come carol-singing. They could pay a visit there only on Christmas Eve.

This evidently pleased the youthful waits, for when they had just got out of the gates one of them called out to another who was standing outside: "Hi, Bill, we've got a horder for Christmas Eve; don't forget to book it!"

It was booked accordingly.

"SAY, father, what is a nobody?"
"A nobody, my son, is a prominent woman's husband."

JACK (examining first print from the negative): "Isn't there some way to make my moustache show a little plainer?"

Photographer: "Why, yes; you might wait a few years and then come again."

THE BELL THAT ONLY RINGS AT CHRISTMAS.

A Quaint Legend.

AT the bottom of a dark and gloomy pool in Shropshire lies a buried village, with a little chapel that once stood high and dry on a hill. The story goes that the bell of the chapel may be heard ringing just after midnight every Christmas Eve, but only at this one time in all the year does the buried bell ring. The pool is on the right bank of the river Severn, and is called the Bomere Pool.

The village people were very wicked in the olden days. Thor and Woden were their gods. Among them dwelt an old priest, who never ceased to warn them that the true God would surely some day punish their sins by a sudden judgment.

But the villagers laughed at the old man, and the children threw stones at him. They tied fish-bones to the skirt of his cassock, so that he was mocked wherever he went.

Now it fell on a Christmas Eve that the old priest set out to gather fuel on the hillside. The wind was howling and the rain was falling in torrents as he climbed the hill. When he came at last to where a barrier of peat held in check the waters of a mere above the valley and the village, he found that the waters had broken down the barrier and were flowing through.

So he left his fuel and ran down to the village, crying to the people to come and stop the flowing waters.

But they were feasting, for their heathen winter festival fell on Christmas Eve.

"Go mind your prayers," they cried out to the old priest. "You only spoil our feast with your dismal croakings!"

Taking a few of the faithful with him, the priest then went to attend a midnight service in his little chapel on the hillside.

And as they were ringing the bell that hung in the bell-cot, a great roar of waters was heard, and a flood entered in at the church door. Higher and higher it rose; it crept to the knees of the priest; it mounted the altar until the flames of the candles spluttered and were drowned.

And the water grew in force until the priest and the few faithful ones with him, the chapel, and all the houses in the village were washed away by the flood.

And they tell to-day over the Christmas fires how anyone sailing on Christmas Eve over the black waters of Bomere Pool can hear the bell ringing that hung once in the bell-cot of the little chapel.

"Ah, Lady Bertram, I had the pleasure of meeting you last year. And how is your dear little girl?"

"My little boy is quite well, thank you."
"Little boy! Ah, yes, of course. I knew it was one of the two."

MUMPING DAY IN LINCOLNSHIRE.

MUMPING DAY is St. Thomas' Day—December 21st, and has no connection whatever with the disease associated with the days of youth. Mumpers are literally those who mumble some traditional tale, begging money or corn.

The word is applied now to beggars in general—though once it was only for the beggars of St. Thomas' Day.

It is an old custom, as old as the hills, and there are hills in Lincolnshire, in spite of the persistent belief that survives among the uninitiated, that Lincolnshire is one long uninteresting swamp.

It is when the golden grain has been safely harvested, when the village feast is in the limbo of forgotten things—when the orchards are bare and the red and yellow fruit lies in heaps among the straw in the barns—it is then that the relics of departed harvesters form into a long procession and go a-mumping.

Starting from the vicarage they go from house to house, and rarely, if ever, are they refused dole either in money or in kind. At some houses a packet of tea awaits them, in another it is sugar; while perhaps some kindly-disposed person will give lunch or tea according to the hour at which the mumpers happen to reach her house.

Through the village the procession winds, every door is open, at every gate stands a relative of one of the widows, and seemingly all who live in villages are related.

The oldest inhabitant leaning on his stick watches, and comments loudly on anyone who happens to be missing from this year's procession; death having claimed her. And his flow of pessimistic remarks as to the general unhealthiness of the remaining mumpers seems to lend them the dignity of a probable early decease.

Some are very old; some are middle aged, but all in the procession have the indefinable importance that is born of funeral clothes. According to the temperament of the observer, the procession is either pathetic or humorous, most probably it is both.

"HERE," exclaimed the irate customer to the trunk dealer. "I thought you said the chest I bought of you was moth-proof!"

"Well," said the trunk dealer, "wasn't it?"

"No! When I opened it my things were full of holes."

"Great Scott, man! What better proof of 'em do you want?"

MAGISTRATE (to witness): "I understand that you overheard the quarrel between the defendant and his wife!"

Witness: "Yes, sir."

Magistrate: "Tell the court, if you can, what he seemed to be doing."

Witness: "He seemed to be doin' the listenin'."

"So you made him promise to give up smoking?" said one girl.

"Yes," answered the other.

"But I never knew you seriously objected to smoking!"

"I don't. But I had to make him do something to show his affection."

COURTING IN CLOUDLAND.

TUNNA was celebrated the other day at St. Peter's, Eaton Square, the wedding of Mr. John Moore-Brabazon and Miss Hilde Krabbe.

The gentleman is a member of the London Aero Club, and Miss Krabbe is an enthusiastic aeronaut; and it is little to be wondered at, therefore, that the happy couple did most of their courting in the car of a balloon.

Even the proposal was made amongst the clouds, so that only the swallows—and the listening lover—heard the maiden's whispered "yes." Could anything be more appropriate, more poetical?

The credit of originating this exceptionally fascinating method of "popping the question" does not, however, belong to Mr. Brabazon, although several statements to that effect have appeared in print. M. Camille Flammarion, the eminent French astronomer, not only courted his wife in the car of a balloon, but spent his honeymoon in like fashion; and it was said at the time that both bridegroom and bride wished to be wedded in the clouds, only the French marriage law, which is very strict, forbade any such innovation.

When we get the flying machines, however, the fashion will surely spread. Love loves to be alone, and above the earth if possible. Ask the attendant at the Monument, and he will tell you that the cage at the summit is a favourite rendezvous for courting couples; and before the ball at the top of St. Paul's Cathedral was closed to visitors it used to be tenanted day after day by a succession of solitary "spooners."

Only last August, again, a wealthy German baron took the girl of his choice to the top of Mont Blanc, proposed there, and was there accepted. It is a fact, too, that at least one happy marriage resulted from the accidental stopping of the big wheel at Earl's Court some few years back.

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DON'TS for Christmas.

Heed Them and You'll Be Happy.

HONESTLY, there is nothing truer than that ill-temper waits upon indigestion, and no other time of the year is half so deadly to the digestion as is Christmas. You can hardly hit upon four more feeding articles of diet than turkey, roast beef, mince pies, and plum pudding.

If the weather is cold and you are fit, you can eat any two of them in moderation with advantage, but the strongest digestive apparatus cannot tackle an overdose of them without at best becoming torpid. From a dietetic point of view, Christmas pudding in itself forms an ample meal.

The average Christmas diner, however, begins with turkey, sausages, gravy, and vegetables, continues with plum pudding soaked in brandy, and probably a mince pie or two to follow, then goes on to cheese and oranges and nuts. As likely as not, he ends up with a glass of port and a cup of coffee.

Now, it is safe to say, that there is not one digestion in a thousand among persons of over twenty-five years of age which can stand such a succession of heavy, stimulating foods, and if wines like port and sherry are drunk at the same time the result is bound to be disastrous.

Again, it is an utter mistake to imagine that burnt brandy makes a plum pudding more digestible. As a matter of fact, it has an exactly opposite effect.

Most people dine early on Christmas Day. The too heavy meal leaves them torpid and sleepy and not fit for any fun or amusement. Consequently,

they lose half, and the best half of the day. In fact, very many of us lose practically the whole of the rest of our holiday, and go back to work two days later with a weary feeling. Don't forget that, if Christmas is a holiday to you, it isn't so for everyone. It causes more work than usual for lots of people. With the houses full and extra cooking, it means double tasks for the servants. Remember this, and arrange the household machine so as to give the maids as little extra trouble as possible.

It's cruel hard work to the postman, too, especially in rural districts. Don't omit to post your Christmas greetings early, and you will lessen the work of all postal officials.

When sending presents to your friends don't omit to tie them up securely and label them well. If you fail to do so you will disappoint your friend, yourself, and, into the bargain, bring down oburgations on your head from some unlucky official of the Post Office.

If you could only take a glance round the parcel hospital at Mount Pleasant a day or two before Christmas! Broken boxes, torn paper, loose string, lost labels, and perspiring officials! Such derelicts, too! One parcel was found to contain a skinned rabbit, a bottle of gin, a packet of cocoa, and a pound of coloured sweets, all broken and mixed together in a ghastly compound.

One other postal pointer. Don't send cards to places abroad at the reduced rate applicable to

printed papers, a halfpenny for two ounces. Christmas cards cannot be sent at this rate unless they can easily be withdrawn from their envelopes. And be careful about your picture postcards for abroad. They must bear a penny, not a halfpenny, stamp.

Consider your neighbours a little at Christmas. Don't pound the piano till all hours of the night if your house is a semi-detached one; and for your own sake, as well as that of the people next door, don't give your children noisy toys as Christmas presents. If there is one nuisance worse than another, it is the small boy with a tin trumpet or a toy drum. He likes noise and doesn't know what nerves are. Other people are not so fortunate.

Don't be reckless about risks of fire when decorating for Christmas. The fire brigade can tell you that their work is doubled at Christmastide, and that most of the extra fires are caused by dried evergreens catching from a gas lamp, or from exposed tapers setting fire to Christmas trees. Remember that those cheap celluloid toys are little better than so much gunpowder, and that cotton wool is an abominably inflammatory substance.

If you are a business man accustomed to a sedentary life do not be tempted by fine Christmas weather to cycle enormous distances or make three rounds of the golf course instead of your usual one. You will only be very sorry for yourself afterwards, and go back to work feeling like a crushed worm instead of being bucked up.



When Courage is Needed Yuletide.

By Our Office Economist.

You do want a little courage at Christmas time, especially if you are not too well off. If you are wealthy, you require courage, too—the courage to spend; but if you are poor, you want the courage to deny. Now, the lack of this latter courage is one of the chief reasons why Christmas, instead of being the season, par excellence, of happiness, is turned into a time of semi-despair.

Candidly, if you are poor you want courage, especially when the forms of friends rise up before you. You feel that something must be done; you are aware that they will shower gifts on you; your one desire is to do the same by them. And that is where the sadness of Christmas time comes in for many a poor man and his family. They well know they cannot give as they know they will receive; and that is just what they want to do, for it has been their custom.

In return for, perhaps, valuable gifts received, it, of course, requires courage to sit down and write but a note of thanks, when in days before measure for measure has been returned. But this returning of measure for measure at Christmas time is one of the hypocrisies of the season; if a gift is given the matter ought to end there, so far as the giver is concerned.

Alas! be it truthfully said, it too often does not end there; the giver not infrequently is but an investor after all, speculating half-a-crown on a present, in the hope of its bringing him a five shilling one in return. Such a gift is, of course, no gift; it is rather an attempt at extortion.

In the giving of Christmas presents, too, one has to be very careful.

You probably know an individual, and make up your mind to send him a gift value thirty shillings. But, before you do any such thing, consider well. He may not be a man of courage; he may deny himself—and, more, deny his family—food and clothing urgently required, in order that your gift be returned to you in full value.

That is one of the errors that well-off people often fall into at Christmas time; they send out presents without a thought being given to the position or wealth of the recipients, and it often causes these recipients a deal of heart-burning. Mr. Smith is going to give his son Tommy a nice new top-coat as a Christmas present, but a few days before December 25th, a fine gift arrives from his wealthy friend, Robinson. What is the result?

Poor little Tommy's coat is sacrificed so that a fine present be sent to Mr. Robinson! That kind of thing happens every Christmas. Is it not a pity that there are so many Mr. Smiths to the fore?

The question is, why should the home and members of the family be made to suffer so that a present, or presents, be tendered in payment of a gift, or gifts, received? If a man cannot afford to return present for present, let him have the courage to acknowledge it; let him not act the hypocrite by attempting to do what is really beyond his power.

Christmas gives us an opportunity of finding out who are our friends, and who are not.

Take your own case, reader. Suppose a little

before Christmas time arrives you sit down and make out a list of the persons who yearly send you gifts, and to whom you send presents. Then drop each a nice, kindly worded note saying that this year you are sending out no presents.

The result at Christmas time may or may not surprise you; it will depend on your knowledge of mankind. But I believe you would be a little surprised at the few gifts you received; you would probably find that not 5 per cent. of your so-called friends remembered you at all! What of the 95 per cent. Ah, these were not real friends, you only thought they were.

We know what a delight Christmas parties are to the youngsters; every father and mother who can at all afford it likes to ask the children's chums to spend an evening at the home. But this is often a sad drain on a couple; still, their young ones are asked out every other night during the festive season, so the parents imagine they really must give a *quid pro quo*.

Courage is required here; if they really cannot afford it, they should decide to do without it. The children would be disappointed in all likelihood, but that could not be helped. Personally, I have known a family go without meat altogether for a week or two, just at the season when it was most required, all in order to give a children's party.

Do not mistake me. I am not a disciple of selfishness; I merely think that it is folly to try and keep up sides with acquaintances if you are not in a position to do so, but you want a deal of courage.



Dousing Trees with Cider.

Some Curious Christmastide Superstitions.

If he sees a clothes line hung out at Christmastide, a South German fairly shudders. He considers it every bit as likely to bring him bad luck as the Southern negro if he meets a hare when out collecting swamp holly for his Christmas decorations.

Germans have several other peculiar superstitions about the greatest yearly festival, which are quite unknown in our islands. One is that a fish scale put in your purse on Christmas Day will bring you good luck and lots of money for the ensuing year.

In Bavaria it is the custom on the night of Christmas Eve to build up little heaps of moist sand moulded with a thimble, one for each member of the household. Should one of these moulds crack and fall to pieces in the night it signifies that the maker will die before another twelve months have passed away.

In various parts of England there are quite a number of old beliefs connected with mince pies. In some parts of the country it would be considered a most unlucky omen to offer a guest in the house a mince pie. The guest must ask for it if he wants one.

On the other hand, Yorkshire people send mince pies away to their friends for luck. But it is an essential part of the performance that the delicacy must be wrapped in silver paper. There is a third and deeply rooted superstition that everyone should eat at least one mince pie before Christmas Day, in order to secure good fortune for the coming year.

Down in Devonshire it is still customary in out-of-the-way parishes to "wassail" the apple trees at

Christmas. It is quite an elaborate ceremony, for which invitations are issued beforehand.

On Christmas Eve the friends meet at the farmer's house, and after a feast of hot cakes and cider, all proceed to the orchard, one of the party bearing a cake and a quart jug of cider. The cake is formally deposited in the first fork of the largest tree, and the cider thrown upon the trunk of the tree. This is supposed to insure a good crop of apples for the coming season.

Speaking of cakes, there is a peculiar Twelfth Night custom, which has been kept up for more than a century at Drury Lane Theatre, and which it would be considered most unlucky to omit. This is the cutting of the Baddeley cake.

Robert Baddeley, who lived more than a century ago, started life as a cook, went on the stage, and achieved great success as Moses in the *School for Scandal*. He left £100 to be invested in this Twelfth Night celebration, and to this day the cake is eaten and port wine negus drunk to his memory in the green room of Drury Lane.

In Ireland the Christmas candle is rarely forgotten, even in the humblest cabin. It is lighted at midnight on Christmas Eve, placed in the window, and allowed to burn there on successive nights till all is consumed. The custom has travelled to Canada and the United States, and in the latter country a regular industry has grown up in the manufacture of these candles, some of which are very large and costly and beautifully ornamented with gilt or coloured scrolls.

Connected with the Christmas tree there are some curious ideas and beliefs. In the north of France it is customary to plant the evergreen in a tub of moist earth so as to preserve it over the New Year. It would be considered most unlucky to allow the tree to go brown or die before New Year's Day. In somewhat similar fashion many English people would be horrified at the idea of taking down any Christmas decorations before Twelfth Night has passed.

Roumanians, who live along the banks of the Danube, would imagine all sorts of horrors for the coming year, floods or tempests especially, if the ceremony of blessing the river were omitted. This ceremony is performed by the Greek priests who break the ice and throw a small cross into the water. A rush follows for the cross, and whoever succeeds in securing it is supposed to be certain of good fortune in the coming year.

The people of St. Petersburg have a similar belief about the River Neva, which is blessed in the same manner. As soon as the blessing is over numbers of people dip themselves into the consecrated water in spite of the usually intense cold.

In Scotland superstition wreathes itself rather round New Year than Christmas. On December 31st the streets are full of people waiting for midnight to strike. Then after good wishes have been interchanged and healths drunk each lassie hastens home where she anxiously awaits the coming of her future "guid man," for the belief is that he who first crosses the threshold on New Year's morn is the predestined partner for life of the maid within.

"Christmas" seasonable facts and fancies are contributed by the Duke of Argyll, Countess de la Warr, Sir Herbert Maxwell, Sir Henry Seton Karr, and many others to the XMAS PEARSON'S MAGAZINE.

Picked Pars.

A few Items of Fact that will
Interest you.

Saved!

Half-a-dozen firemen rushed into a burning warehouse in New York and stumbled over three women, expensively dressed, lying on the floor. When they were rescued they turned out to be lay figures.

One Day Insured.

An insurance agent called on a Sheffield labourer one Saturday afternoon, and persuaded him to insure his life. The man paid his first instalment at the rate of 6d. per week. Later in the afternoon he died from heart disease.

Empty Prison.

The prison at Guernsey was empty recently for two days, during which numbers of people were admitted to inspect the building. Then a man was sentenced for disorderly conduct and the prison was again occupied. The prison had not been unoccupied during the previous fifteen years.

Visible at Twenty Miles.

The searchlight on the *Dreadnought* is of quite a new type, being able to throw powerful beams of light in exactly opposite directions. Each light is of nearly 50,000 candle-power, and, being placed on a high manipulating platform on the top of the tripod mast, will be visible twenty miles away.

Collision Meant Death.

A curious incident happened at the meet of the Weston-super-Mare Harriers recently. The hounds were in full cry, in a field of roots, after a hare, when a second hare was disturbed, with the result that, racing in an opposite direction, she collided with the first hare. Both were killed on the spot, one having its neck dislocated, the other apparently dying of fright.

A Press-the-Button House.

An official of the General Electrical Company is building near New York a house in which electricity will replace fire, supply the illuminant, and be used for many domestic purposes. The premises will not have any chimneys, the heating and cooking being done by electricity. All the doors will open and close by the pressure of electric buttons, and even the lawn-mowers will be worked by electric motors.

Meat versus Bread.

A bullock's heart and a huge loaf were suspended above the respective goalkeepers' heads in a football match at Wimborne between teams of butchers and bakers.

86 an Ounce.

There is a famine in platinum just now. The price has been rising rapidly for some months. Not long ago you could buy an ounce of it for 44. To-day refiners and chemists are offering 45 15s. and 46 an ounce, and can't get any at the price.

Market for Mice.

At the headquarters of the Imperial Cancer Research Fund in Savoy Place, London, are 100,000 mice, on which scientists are experimenting to discover a cure for cancer. Owing to the famine in mice they are being purchased at three shillings a dozen.

Partridges Charge Window.

An extraordinary incident is reported from Huntingdonshire. A lady was reading in her sitting-room when, smashing two panes of glass, a brace of partridges dashed through the window. They were captured. It is supposed a hawk was pursuing them. Partridges look backwards in flight.

Schoolboy Scientist.

The wireless telegraphy experiments of a thirteen-year-old schoolboy, of New Haven, Connecticut, are attracting attention in the United States. He has a complete apparatus in a barn near his home, where he is able to intercept commercial messages transmitted from steamers. During the visit of some cruisers he maintained communication with the naval wireless operators on board.

Who was Right?

At Kingston, the other day, a police superintendent said that, according to his stop-watch, a motorist who was summoned was travelling at the rate of thirty miles an hour. The motorist, however, said his speedometer at the time showed a speed of fourteen miles. He handed in a certificate from the makers stating that they had tested the instrument and found it in perfect working order. The case was dismissed.

Killed by Tea Drinking.

In an inquest at Stepney recently on a labourer's wife the doctor stated that she died of heart disease, accelerated by drinking several cups of tea.

Ear-Drums of Silver.

Artificial ear-drums, made of thin leaves of silver, are being used in the Russian military hospital for diseases of the ear, to replace defective organs.

Millionaire Trade Unionist.

The millionaire banker of New York, Jacob Schiff, has become a member of a Stonemasons' Trade Union. With uplifted hands the financier took the pledge not to work for less than three shillings an hour, and never to have anything to do with a non-union job.

Royal Court Without Titles.

Norway is not only a democratic country, but the hardy Norwegians have insisted on a thoroughly democratic court. There, to give but one instance, will be found no hereditary distinctions or titles. Queen Maud's mistress of the robes and ladies-in-waiting are each plain "Mrs."

Courtesy Appreciated.

A man of means who has been staying at Truro made frequent use of the post-office there, and in recognition of the attention shown to him by the two lady assistants has sent them each fifteen shares in a South African diamond mining company. The shares were worth nearly £130 to each assistant.

What a Sell!

An American collector bought a Renaissance piece of furniture in iron, apparently some sort of miniature tabernacle, having small fluted columns and a gracefully shaped cupola, for £1,000 at a curiosity shop in Poland. The dealer supposed that it had been used for the celebration of Jewish rites in private houses during times of persecution, and it bore every sign of age. But his pride has been shattered. Travelling on a Paris railway recently, he saw on the platform new and freshly painted replicas of his tabernacle. The £1,000 curio was the top part of a penny-in-the-slot chocolate machine.

Picture Pars.

A gold-plated pencil-case is given to the sender of each original
illustrated paragraph used here. See footnote.

A NOVEL PEN-WIPER.



You can make a novel pen-wiper in this manner: It is quickly made. Get a cheap little fancy glass and pour some small shot, about No. 10 size, into it; enough to cover the nib will suffice. When you have finished with the pen for the time being, push it amongst the shot and this will keep the nib clean and bright.



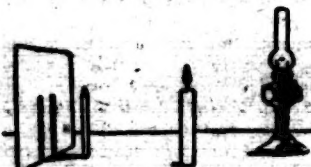
HEAT VEILS FOR FIREMEN.

A very humane invention is the heat veil for firemen. Probably, after the danger of falling beams, etc., the next worst peril firemen face is the overpowering heat. These veils lessen the risk from this source considerably. The veil has windows of mica, and is composed of cane fibres, which are able to retain water for a long period. When a fireman is attending a conflagration he fastens one of these veils, after it has been soaked, to his helmet and the terrific heat which would otherwise strike his face, is lessened.



TELLING THE CANDLE-POWER.

This is the way in which the candle-power of a lamp can be ascertained. Obtain a candle sold by grocers as a "specimen six." This is approximately the candle-power unit. Place a



vertical rod—a lead pencil will do—in front of a white screen. Put the lighted candle and lamp side by side and notice the shadows cast on the screen. The one cast by the lamp is much the denser of the two. Now move back the lamp until the two shadows are of equal depth. Measure the distance from the screen to the candle and from the screen to the lamp. Square each distance and divide the first number so obtained into the second. This will give you the information desired. For example, suppose the distances were 1 foot and 2 feet. $1^2 = 1$; $2^2 = 4 = 4$. Then the lamp is 4 candle-power. In precisely the same way the candle-power of an electric lamp can be tested. Where it is not possible to move the lamp to and from the screen, so as to get shadows of equal density, you should fix your screen on a rigid frame, but one that can easily be moved to suit the light that is being tested.

A CAT-PROOF COTE.



An idea which proves particularly useful to pigeon owners is shown here. It protects pigeons living in cotes from their chief enemies, the cats. About four feet up the cote a piece of tin or zinc—two to three feet in depth—is nailed all the way round. Cats can climb up as far as this, but they cannot go higher, because the slipperiness of the metal will not allow their paws to grip; therefore they can't get at the pigeons.



PINS FLOAT!

Here is a simple little trick you can amuse your friends with this Christmas. It requires no practice and hardly any preparation. Get a tumbler of water; place half a cigarette paper on it, taking care that no water touches the uppermost side of the paper; then rest a pin on the paper. Gradually the paper will get soaked with water, when it will sink to the bottom of the tumbler, leaving the pin floating on top where it will remain some little time.



What Famous People are Saying.

Bright Paragraphs by
Bright People.

Sir T. Lipton on Saving.

Saving is the first great principle of all success.

Miss M. E. Braddon on Nest-Eggs.

The life in which there is no nest-egg ready for the day of trouble cannot be beautiful. It can only be heroic, the unconsidered martyrdom of thousands.

Judge Willis on Witnesses.

My experience is that ladies are the most intelligent witnesses. They always give me what enables me to judge if they are telling the truth—all the little details.

Elizabeth Chesebon on the Infant Prodigy.

Present-day mothers and nurses are too eager to have their babies excel, to be able to boast that their parvulus child can talk or walk or sing or dance two months before anybody else's. The infant prodigy, instead of being gently but firmly suppressed, is encouraged in every possible way.

Mr. E. Campbell on Cycling.

The cycling public has changed somewhat during the past ten years, and does not now crave incessantly for novelties at any price. Those who cycle are fairly well content with the bicycles they have, and, while they may be well disposed to consider anything that offers an added pleasure or increased comfort, they do not purchase a novelty simply because it is novel.

The Lord Mayor on Poor Relations.

If anyone wants to find out how many poor relations he has, let him become Lord Mayor of London.

German Emperor on Himself.

I myself work on without being disheartened, and I believe that I actually make progress.

The Duke of Argyll on Jealousy.

It is the height of ignorant absurdity to be jealous of a man because he has more than his neighbours.

Bishop Carlyle on Anger.

I would not give a fig for a man or woman who is not capable of anger; but anger must be for sufficient reason.

Bishop of Worcester on Hypocrisy.

There are two kinds of hypocrisy. One is pretending to be better than we are, and the other is pretending to be worse; and of the two I think the second is the more contemptible.

Mr. Albert Vickers on Universal Disarmament.

Until such a time as we can keep in order the great cities of the world without the aid of the police, it is, in my opinion, simply ridiculous to talk about general disarmament of nations.

The King on Wealth.

I know of no nobler use of wealth than its expenditure for the benefit of those who are to follow us.

Miss Edeline Terriss on Personality.

Personality is of greater value than beauty, either of face or figure, to a woman; and better than a handsome face and physique to a man.

Madame Sarah Grand on Man's Courage.

The thing that fills me with admiration in regard to man is not the courage with which he faces death, but the courage with which he faces life.

Mr. C. B. Fry on Real Sport.

The very essence of sport consists, not so much in what we do as in how we do it; and still not so much in how we do it, as in how we try to do it.

Judge Rensoul on Judicial Decisions.

If a judge gives a judgment which he afterwards thinks is wrong, he is much more unhappy than anyone else in the case, even, perhaps, including the losing party.

Mr. Birrell on the Future.

In fifty years' time this country will be far better for human habitation than now, and filled with a race of people stronger, mentally and physically, less pigheaded, and less obstinate.

A gold-plated pencil-case will be given to the sender of each original illustrated paragraph accepted and used on this page. Address your envelope to The Page Six Editor, Pearson's Weekly, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

NATURE SERIES.



By "Gamekeeper."

and have been forced since to rely chiefly on the habits of birds and beasts for my weather forecasts.

Everyone knows the old saying about the red sky at night being the shepherd's delight; yet there is sometimes a most beautiful aspect of the sky towards evening—strings of floating, fleecy clouds just blushing with delicate pink—which is a sure sign of rain.

When his rabbits come out early in the evening for their supper, the keeper knows the night will be wet; and in winter when they forsake their snug "seats," and betake themselves to their burrows—whether the north wind blows or not—there will be snow.

Pheasants, too, are no less weather-wise than rabbits; for when they hurry over their breakfast, the day is likely to be wet. And when lambs gallop madly, kicking their legs in the air sideways, the prospect for picnic-parties is not good.

Should thunder be coming, flies cease their lively flitting to and fro, and move more with deliberate object; moreover, instead of mildly nipping your hand, they give a deep thrust which there is no mistaking.

FLIES TAKE A HEAVY MEAL.

The same instinct, which warns bees to gorge themselves with honey should danger threaten their hive, warns flies to take a full meal when coming thunder is likely to prevent their feeding for some time. Before rain, moles bore shallow tunnels that they may catch with ease worms brought to the surface by the rain.

Perhaps you have watched rooks assemble in late afternoon at some regular meeting-place before setting out together for their roosting-place. If, instead of sailing gracefully to their tryst in the trees till all are ready, small parties every now and then dash out and dive through the air with moorhen-like cries, "they bodes wet," in the rustic tongue.

The vast flocks of peewits which gather on the autumn fallows grow restless when showery weather may be expected; they rise frequently and swoop round, now soaring high, then suddenly dashing earthwards and skimming along the surface.

Should a railway pass near a keeper's beat, the steam-clouds from the engines give him a useful weather hint. When the steam is beaten downwards and hangs about heavily, there will be use for a mackintosh before long.

WHAT THE KEEPER LOVES TO SEE.

In the summer, when he is so anxious lest heavy rains drown his game-broods, the keeper loves to see the smoke from his cottage chimney rise straight toward the floor of heaven; and he rejoices still more when on his rounds he sees the scarlet flowers of the pimpernel wide open.

I have a cemented floor in the shed where I boil pheasant-food, which never fails to tell me truly any serious intention of the weather. Should rain be falling while my floor is dry, I know it is only a passing shower; but when the cement looks as if it had been recently washed, then I know a regular "soaker" is coming.

Spiders also are weather-prophets. When the keeper sets out on an autumn morning there is often a veil of fog, which may turn to rain or to a faultless day; should bedewed spider-webs spread in every direction, the sun will triumph.

When your pussy's coat is electrified, a frost is at hand; but should a cat wash the back of its head as if it had never been washed before, there will be a "fall" of some sort.

Every village urchin will tell you "it be agoin' ter rain," when martins and swallows skim low over the meadows. Starlings hawking for insects are heralds of fair weather.

When the clouds assume those pretty forms responsible for the term "mackerel sky," they are said to prophesy "not long wet, not long dry."

And so long as they can see a patch of blue sky large enough—were it made of corduroy, I presume—to make their "old men" a pair of trousers, the venerable dames of the country-side speak hopefully of the weather.

THAT those who dwell in the wilds of the country should find the future of the weather a useful topic of conversation is not inexcusable. If there is one subject on which rustics are authorities, it is the weather; but, when in doubt, they look to the gamekeeper for counsel's opinion.

And should the keeper possess a persevering corn, it proves one of his best aids towards maintaining his reputation as a weather-prophet. I once had a most faithful corn, but got rid of it,

THE LAW'S SHADY SIDE.

Dodges Unscrupulous Solicitors Employ.

THE Law, taken as a whole, is a profession which is commendably jealous of its honour and reputation, but that there are many black sheep within its fold cannot be denied.

The cases within the last few years of solicitors who, in breach of their trust, have converted moneys belonging to clients to their own use are fresh within the memory of readers, and need not be particularly referred to here. Their peculations were discovered, and they were punished, and there the matter ends.

Apart from these criminal offences, however, there are many lesser evils which flourish in the lower stratum of the legal profession, and which, being cleverly cloaked, never come to the cognisance of the Incorporated Law Society, the body which governs all matters relating to solicitors and their professional conduct.

For instance, there is touting.

Now, it is one of the most cherished traditions and tenets of the lawyer that his fraternity shall not advertise in any way, and any inflection from this mandate will bring the offender into trouble. Yet there are legal touts by the score who infest the County Courts and Police Courts, and advertise their willingness to conduct cases, not infrequently on the understanding that if unsuccessful they shall not be paid for their work. But the worst kind of tout can be typified by the following examples:

A man walking along the pavement slipped and fell down an open grating. He injured his leg, and was taken to an adjacent hospital. He had his wound dressed and came out.

Just as he emerged from the hospital a gentleman accosted him and asked him what had happened. The man explained how his accident occurred, adding it was entirely his own fault. The gentleman, however, inquired if he intended to obtain some compensation, and the man eagerly took the bait.

They immediately adjourned to a lawyer's office, the evidence was taken down, and the next morning the owner of the grating received a legal demand for £100 damages, and, in default of payment, proceedings would be commenced forthwith.

Although on inquiry the affair was found to be a pure accident, yet the owner, rather than enter into costly litigation with a man who could not pay his solicitor's bill if successful, decided to pay half that sum, plus, of course, the liberal costs of the injured man's attorney.

In another case a man was taken to a police-station on suspicion of passing false coin. While at the station the coins were officially tested and found to be genuine, whereupon the prosecutor, finding he had made a mistake, apologised and gave the man a sovereign as compensation, with which the latter expressed complete satisfaction.

Soon after he left the station he was joined by a legal tout, who invited the man to an office, where the whole story was repeated and taken down. The next morning the would-be prosecutor received a solicitor's letter, claiming £50 as damages for false imprisonment!

In the end the matter was compromised, the solicitor receiving for his costs almost as much as the man's compensation.

It can readily be seen that this kind of case is "manufactured" by the solicitor chiefly for the sake of costs. Sometimes these "costs" swallow up the damages received, and in all such matters the solicitor relies upon the defendant paying a sum of money rather than fighting a man of straw, and so these touting men reap a rich harvest.

Another little pastime of some solicitors is to "run up" costs in common law actions.

A client brings a case to a lawyer and wishes to settle it at once to save further annoyance, but the solicitor will not allow him.

"No, sir," he will say, "we must show fight; we must 'spar' with the defendant, and after a time he will settle for less."

Sometimes he does settle for less, sometimes not; but, at any rate, the "sparring" always results in a nice little sum of costs when the case is finally disposed of.

Solicitors who take up cases on speculation, and charge nothing unless they succeed in the action, and thus obtain such costs from the defendant, are not so rare as might be expected. Such solicitors, of course, always make sure that the defendant is a man of substance, and can pay their bill if so ordered.

There may not appear to be anything vitally wrong in the matters above mentioned—there is nothing criminal in them—but this much is very certain: They are not in accord with the high code of honour set up by the best practitioners—namely, that a lawyer should always place the interest of his client before his own.

He was telling his sweetheart about the members of the football team.

"Now, there's Johnson," said he; "in a few weeks he will be our best man."

And then she lisped, "Oh, Jack, this is so sudden!"

THE glamour which the musical profession exercises upon ambitious young people, whose aspirations are generally quite out of proportion to their talents, seems unaccountable to one who has been behind the scenes and knows the inner workings of that calling, the sordid struggles to be surmounted, the high standard to be attained, and the almost super-human patience and perseverance which are absolutely necessary for success. For the aspirants are many and the prizes few.

Money in this, as in most professions, is a powerful lever, and but little is known, though much is whispered in musical circles, as to the real extent to which pecuniary considerations influence concert managers in their selection of new artists from the hordes who are always clamouring to be heard.

It is a significant and well-known fact that numbers of really well-equipped artists are willing to give their services without fee for the sake of making a public appearance; while, if the occasion is one which is sure to draw a big "paying" audience (as distinguished from an assemblage of deadheads), plenty of artists are willing to pay as much as £20 for the privilege of filling up the gaps in the programme while the "star" who is drawing the money is resting.

This system has been carried to such an extent that the subsidy paid by the assisting artist is often reckoned in as part of the legitimate proceeds of the concert, quite as a matter of course, along with the revenue derived from the sale of tickets and programmes.

RUNNING A SPECIAL CONCERT.

What does it cost to introduce a new artist to the public?

There are plenty of musicians now established favourites, or still struggling to come out, who could a tale unfold as to the sums they have been asked by agents undertaking to give them opportunities to make their mark. Five hundred pounds would not be far out, nor would £1,000 be unheard of.

And in justice to those who turn their attention to the business side of the profession, it must be conceded that "making a splash" is an expensive process. The ambitious young artist generally wants to make his (or her) debut with due dignity and importance, and this means hiring the Queen's Hall and one of the best orchestras available.

A concert arranged on these lines easily runs into £200 for one night's expenses, and if much is done in the way of advertising, a good deal more can soon be spent without bringing in any return. For no matter how much a new artist bespatters the hoardings of London with his portrait and descriptive titles, which do not err on the side of over modesty, the musical public will not spend their money on an unproved performer.

FILLING THE HALL WITH DEADHEADS.

This means that all the tickets have to be given away, and the seats filled with deadheads. Thus the initial expenditure of £200 has to be regarded as a "lock-up" speculation, for the only immediate result the unfortunate artist obtains in return for his outlay consists of Press notices. If these are few and unfavourable, the venture must be regarded as a dead loss, for on these Press notices largely depends the artist's chance of future engagements in London and the provinces.

So many concerts of this description are given every year that concert managers have a difficult task to find audiences for their clients. Even though the tickets are given away, it is difficult to get music-sated deadheads to take the trouble to attend.

The fact of the matter is that there are far too many concerts, and far too many mediocre artists making their debut every year—far more than have any chance of making a bare livelihood by platform appearances. Such is the rage for publicity nowadays that it is impossible to persuade clever amateurs that they are never likely to be anything more.

The concert manager, who is, of course, a business man and not a philanthropist, does not perhaps discourage these ambitious aspirants to the extent desirable for the advantage of the musical community and the pockets of the would-be star's admiring parents. Customers come to him with their money, and he, like any other tradesman, does not send them away.

The upward path of the instrumentalist is even more steep and thorny than that of the vocalist, for the demand for their services is less.



The Cost of Making a Début.

My Notebook.

The Warfare between
Man and Woman.

FOR the December—the present—number of THE RAPID Miss Marie Corelli has sent us what I think is the most human document she has ever penned. She entitles her contribution "Man's War Against Woman." It is an essay that should make history—a thoughtful, analytic, even-sided, helpful argument.

I can only grumble at the title. It should have been, "The Warfare between Man and Woman." Because Miss Corelli is more than generous to man. In many ways she becomes his champion. This warfare, this jealousy of the powers, and of the selfishness of the sexes started in the Garden of Eden. It continues to-day and may for ever continue.

I do not suppose there is a household in this country where the feeling has not, some time or another, arisen in the mind of the man, "I will be boss," or in the mind of the woman, "Will you?" That, in my own vulgar and simple way of putting it, is Miss Corelli's text. Every domestic quarrel leaves that soreness as an aftermath.

And yet, as Miss Corelli says, all this is but "stage thunder." The sexes must come together, and they must endeavour to live in as sweet a harmony as circumstances will permit.

Every reasoning man will bless her for her decided views on the "shrinking sisterhood":

May I dare to say (she says) to my distracted, man-fighting sisters that I am just a woman like themselves, and yet, not a "suffragette"? I claim no more rights than are already mine to the full—and as for wanting a vote, why should I? I suppose, taking all the circumstances of my life and surroundings into consideration, that I have as good a right to claim a "vote" as anyone. From very early years I have had to work hard and continuously for myself; and I have never been indebted to any man for the least assistance or support in the making of my career. On the contrary, many a man has been indebted to me for a helping hand out of pecuniary difficulty. I earn every pound I possess; I am a householder, paying rates and taxes, and I employ men who depend upon me for their wages. These men having a "right" to vote, while I have none. Why then do I not insist on this desired "right"?—this political privilege of voting? Why? Because, frankly and honestly, I do not want it. Again, why? Because, to my mind, the very desire for a vote on the part of woman is an open confession of weakness—a proof that she has lost ground and is not sure of herself. For if she is a real woman—if she has the natural heritage of her sex, which is the mystic power to persuade, enthrall, and subjugate man, she has no need to come down from her throne and mingle in any of his political frays, inasmuch as she is already the very head and front of Government.

And she goes on to say in the very next paragraph: Let those who will laugh at or sneer down the statement, the fact remains that a man is seldom anything more than a woman's representative. No man, in either business or pleasure, can ever quite shake off the influence of the woman with whom he is most privately and intimately connected. Good or bad she colours his life.

I think I must have said something like that in MY NOTEBOOK until you are pretty well tired of it. Woman always does make a man just exactly what she wants him to be. That is, of course, if she is the right kind of woman, and has the right kind of material to work upon. Man is very much like an early season gooseberry pie. A wise woman sweetens him to taste, or, as Miss Corelli puts it, "she colours his life."

Woman is man's sovereign and supreme ruler. From the first breath he draws, she and she alone possesses him. When he is born he at once displays that fractious and fickle disposition which is so often significant of his future development, and woman has to carry him up and down in her arms, talking nonsense to him, or, as it is called, "baby language." She knows she has to begin that way, because he would not understand sooner.

From this earliest commencement then of his career, his training is her business. If she persists in bringing him up after the Adam style—in giving him always the best of her life and the best of her love, the juiciest side of the Apple in short—if she coddles and spoils him till he imagines he is, as he asserts, her lord and master, then she has only herself to blame if he continues to "lord and master" it over her always. He can scarcely be recommended for accepting the position she forces upon him, that of being her idol. If he thinks her a fool for making an idol of him, his judgment is perfectly sound.

Whatever may be the folly and tyranny of man in regard to woman, woman alone is in fault for his war against her. It is she who has taught him to fight for everything he wants. It is she who has always urged him to kick out hard at any obstacle that threatens to interfere with his getting his own way.

And then Miss Corelli gets at what is, without doubt, the root of all the trouble, and of all future trouble. She asks if any man can reverence or love the screaming, umbrella-brandishing representative of her sex who has to be violently handled by a policeman. Miss Corelli seems to say, though she does not quite put it that way, that no man ought to be expected to love and reverence a paper pattern or a Jill-in-the-Box. Men only laugh

at those things. Men won't worship curl papers, hair-pins, ties, straw hats, tailor-made suits, and a coarse, loud voice. But they will go crazy over fluffs and frills and sweetness and tenderness. The imitation man-made kind of get-up, the imitation man-made kind of action, isn't the way to conquer man. But to conquer a man is easy:

It needs no violence,—no wordy discussion. Part of man's battle against woman to-day is an instinctive desire to protect her against herself,—to try and prevent her from losing all that lovely reverence, tenderness, and delicacy which in long-ago-old poetic days made him lift her to the altitude of an angel and guardian goddess of his life.

Of the two sexes man is the greater cry-baby. He can stand less pain than a woman. Adversity affects him quicker. He has more sentiment than a woman. He has every tender virtue hidden away in him somewhere.

Woman's supreme fault is that she hasn't got the sense to realize these things. She doesn't handle a man as she ought to. She doesn't treat him as a little pet lamb. She can conquer him by wheedling him and petting and soothing him. She gets up against what he calls his "business instinct" and his "manly independence" when she tries to "boss him."

I have endeavoured here to give a vague résumé of one portion of Miss Corelli's very clever article. It should be intelligently studied as a whole. As I said at the beginning, it is, I think, the most human document she has yet written.

Miss Corelli's article should lead to an interesting discussion—"Why is Married Life so Dull?" I will give four prizes of a guinea each, and some consolation gifts, to those readers who send me the most interesting articles of not more than 300 words each. I will not publish the names and addresses of the winning competitors. Perhaps that may be wise. It may help you to speak frankly! Send not later than Tuesday, January 1st, 1907, marking your envelope "Married."

Talk it over with your
Children.

Interesting, you ought to talk to them about the things of the day. Children ought to, and like to, believe in you. Children say amongst themselves, "It is so, because mother said so." The child always wants to know what the parents are talking about. The parents ought to explain many such things to the child simply and picturesquely.

Do not put off a child's inquiring mind with excuses and evasions. The child has got to live with you, and the sooner you take him into your confidence and make a companion of him the better it will be for the future of both. Nobody feels a snub quicker than a child. Snub your child now and you start it into waywardness. In after years, when the child does not come to you in its trouble, you are going to blame it for your own folly. That is human nature.

Tell your children what is going on around them. It will be a little trouble to you, but it is worth it. I will try to put it to you as plainly as I want you to put it to your youngsters in future. If you hark back to your school days I think you will find that you and all the boys at your school left off history at a certain period. Suppose, for argument's sake, it was with the accession of Queen Victoria to the throne. Many history books in our time left off at that point. Then we left school and we took up the world's happenings from the day's newspaper reports. There was a big blank in our knowledge of the world's happenings. We knew nothing between Wellington and Gladstone or Beaconsfield.

We think now that our fathers might have told us something about Cobden and Bright, Napier of Magdala and Palmerston, Garibaldi and General Grant, the Chartist Riots and the Great Cotton Famine, and all the other men and events that fired their imaginations. But, because they did not, these things only come to us by accident in later life when it is difficult to enter into the spirit of their real interest.

Take the recent General Election. How much of the broad basis of that did parents explain to their children? The little people of to-day will some day be living under the laws now being made, say the Education Bill. They ought to know something of the men who are making these laws.

A few minutes spent with a child in discussing the day's happenings is time well spent. Your child may sometimes make a remark calculated to set you thinking. Teach it, and it may teach you.

Why I cannot
oblige Walter.

WALTER is a sage of seventeen. He wants me to use my influence to stop the "foolish habit of kissing." He says he "cannot see what there is in a kiss." He has "never kissed a girl, and never wants to."

I wonder what sort of young man Walter really is. I wonder if this is some new kind of trap he is laying for me so that I shall get universally disliked. No, Walter, I am not going to kick against the most popular industry in the world. I think the man who would speak a harsh word about kissing would deserve all the trouble he got.

And to preach against kissing wouldn't do any good, Walter. It wouldn't really. Some of these days when you get your first kiss you will understand why. When you first kiss your first girl, Walter, you'll feel like a sigh set to music. That's how it takes most people. You don't quite know what it is. You don't want to. Nor does the girl. It just takes hold of you like the influenza.

I knew a young man once, Walter, who called on a nice girl and gave her her first kiss and collected his. He went home to bed and he couldn't sleep. The thing had got right into his system. He had it bad. He had it so bad that he didn't remember until next morning that he had left his overcoat at the girl's house.

She found that out soon after he had gone. And what do you think she did? She took that overcoat, Walter, into the parlour, and she sat down in the big arm chair where they—at least, where she had been sitting before, threw the coat over her, put the empty sleeves round her neck, kissed the lapel, snuggled right into the whole thing, and had a real good time.

No, Walter, I can't oblige you. Not with the mistletoe season coming along. Try some older editor.

PETER KHARY (Mr. Notebook).

A GREAT RELIEF.

A CERTAIN gentleman, having recently moved into the district, had had no experience of that terrible scourge known as the town's brass band.

Consequently, when a few days before Christmas a man called upon him and informed him that the band would play "a selection of carols in front of certain houses," he had no objection to his name being added to the list.

He was surprised, however, when the band didn't turn up, but he was simply astounded when, on Boxing Day, his visitor called again "for that little donation!"

"But," protested the gentleman, "your hand did not play in front of my house!"

It was the visitor's turn to be surprised.

"My dear sir," he gasped, "if our band had—er—troubled you, do you think I should have had the colossal impudence to call on you this morning? Your name was on the list, consequently you—er—escaped! Perhaps, sir, being somewhat of a stranger, you don't know our band? Ah!"—sadly—"In that case, sir, you'll never know what you've missed!"

ACQUAINTANCE: "You say you have four boys, and have named them all 'Willie.' Why was that?"

Father: "Because when we call 'Willie,' at least one of them comes along."

"WHAT is an impulse?" asked the teacher.

No answer.

"It's something that comes to you suddenly. Can you form a sentence containing the word? Anyone may answer."

"A snowball is an impulse," ventured the timid little girl with the curly hair.

12 BAD WOMEN

Starts in the Christmas
Number of

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[In this article Mr. Horace Goldin, the famous illusionist, who recently received a special command to appear before Their Majesties King Edward VII. and Queen Alexandra, tells of some novel illusions which, as he expresses it, "anyone can do if they will only practice for a few minutes." Mr. Goldin points out that it is a great mistake for people to imagine that the art of mystifying need necessarily take a long time to acquire. A little patience, a little ingenuity, and the most inexperienced conjurer and illusionist can perform most mysterious tricks, is "the King Illusionist's" contention.]

The "home-made" mystifier is, I am sorry to say, fast disappearing, chiefly because so many people seem to think that an illusion, to be a good and effective one, requires elaborate stage management. This idea, however, is quite a mistaken one, and the tricks which I shall explain in this article can be introduced practically without any pecuniary outlay for apparatus, and with such commonplace articles as coins, handkerchiefs, eggs, and so on.

Moreover, I have proved, times without number, that with a little practice and attention to the instructions anyone can thoroughly master them. I have selected purposely a variety of tricks, so that an interesting "home-made" conjuring programme can be arranged which possesses the additional advantage of being both mysterious and varied.

THE SOLUBLE PENNY.

For this trick a circular piece of glass the size of a penny is required, which you must hide up your left sleeve. Then fill a tumbler full of water, and then ask for the loan of a handkerchief and a penny.

Receive the handkerchief first, and ostensibly shake it with both hands in the air. The real object of this movement is to regain possession of the piece of glass, and, once this has been accomplished, you can hide your hand by throwing the handkerchief loosely over it.

Then take the penny, and, introducing it under the folds of the handkerchief, drop it down your sleeve unnoticed. At the same time thrust the piece of glass upwards, and your audience will be deceived into believing that it is the penny you are still holding underneath the handkerchief. Give it to a lady or gentleman to hold over the glass of water, and arrange the folds of the handkerchief so that none of the tumbler can be seen.

At a given signal your friend must let go his hold, and the piece of glass will sink to the bottom of the tumbler, striking the sides like a coin as it falls. Then, when the handkerchief is removed, the penny which you are supposed to have been using all the while has strangely disappeared.

TO FIRE A PISTOL AT THE HAND.

This extraordinary illusion is performed with real powder, real bullets, and a real pistol, the instrument which effects the deception being the ramrod.

This ramrod is made of polished iron, and on one end of it is very nicely fitted a tube like a telescope tube. When the tube is on the rod there will, of course, appear a little projection. The other end of the rod must be made to resemble this exactly.

The ramrod with the tube on being in your hand, you pass the pistol round to the audience to be examined, and request one of them to put in a little powder. Then take the pistol yourself and put in a very small piece of wadding, and ram it down, and in doing so you will leave the tube of the ramrod inside the pistol.

To allay any suspicion which might arise in the minds of your audience, you hand them the ramrod for inspection. The ramrod being returned to you, you hand the pistol to some person in the audience, requesting him to insert a bullet, and to mark it in such a way that he will know it again. You then take the pistol back and put in a little more wadding.

In ramming it down the rod slips into the tube,

into the plate just as the pistol goes off. A "trick pistol" of this sort only costs a few shillings, and will last a lifetime.

HOW TO PASS A TUMBLER THROUGH THE TABLE.

The spectators should be placed some little distance on a level on the opposite side of the table to where you sit, having spread, unperceived, a handkerchief across your knees.



Take a drinking glass—a tumbler with no stem is the best—and, covering it with paper, mould the covering as nearly as possible to the shape of the glass. Then with some "cabalistic" phrases drop the glass into your handkerchief unobserved, and, as the paper retains the shape, there is no difficulty in making the onlookers believe the tumbler to be still beneath it.

Passing the glass in the left hand beneath the table, you now crush the paper down with your right hand, when the glass will appear to have been sent through the table. It is better to have a cloth on the table, as the trick becomes easier.

THE CHANGING COINS.

Hide a penny up your left sleeve, first of all, without anyone seeing you. Borrow a handkerchief, which throw lightly over the left hand. Take a two-shilling piece, and apparently wrap it up in the handkerchief, but in reality substitute the penny in its place, dropping the florin down your sleeve.

Give the handkerchief to someone to hold. Then borrow another one and a penny, and go through the same movements as before, this time substituting the silver for the copper coin. Give this handkerchief to a second person, and station them facing one another some yards apart.

Then with a wave of your magic wand you command the coins to change places, and if you have carried out the trick without a mistake, the effect will be one of profound surprise.

THE SYMPATHETIC PENNIES.

Hold your hands out on the table, palm upwards, and about a foot apart, with a penny in each. Then turn them over quickly, making a jerky throwing movement with the right hand.

If carefully practised, this will cause the penny to fly across the intervening space with such velocity as not to be distinguishable, and join the coin in the left hand.

THE MAGIC OMELET.

State that you are about to cook an omelet in a hat over the flame of a candle. Borrow a hat, then produce four eggs, which you break in the hat, place the hat for a short time over the flame of the candle, and shortly afterwards produces an omelet cooked and quite hot.

Some persons will believe that by the aid of certain ingredients you have been enabled to cook the omelet without the fire, but the secret of this trick is that the omelet has been previously cooked and placed in the hat; but could not be seen, because the operator, when breaking the eggs, placed it too high for the spectators to see the inside.

The eggs were empty ones, the contents having



been previously sucked; but, to prevent any suspicion, one should by accident be broken on the table. This, of course, should be a full one.

THE FISH AND INK.

This is really a first-rate delusion. You bring before the spectators a glass vase full of ink. You dip a ladle into it, and pour out some of the ink on a plate, in order to convince the audience that the substance in the vase is really ink.



You then throw a handkerchief over the vase, and instantly withdraw it, when the vase is found to be filled with pure water and gold fish swimming about. This trick is not an impossibility, as it may seem, and is performed as follows:—To the interior of the vessel is fitted a black silk lining, which adheres closely to the sides when pressed by the water, and which is withdrawn inside the

handkerchief during the performance of the trick. The ladle has a hollow handle with an opening into the bowl; in the handle is a spoonful or so of ink, which runs into the bowl when it is held downwards during the act of dipping into the vase.

THE INCOMBUSTIBLE HANDKERCHIEF.

Get a brass, or copper, or other metal ball, about three inches in diameter. The large knob of a door or of the stair banisters will do. Fit very tightly round it a fine linen handkerchief; you had better practise with an old one of your own before you venture to borrow one from your fair cousin. Then with a pair of tongs take a red-hot coal from the fire, blow on it to make it glow, and let it rest on the top of the handkerchief. The coal will continue to burn, but the handkerchief will not be injured.

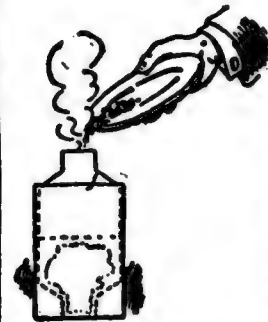
The explanation of this effect is that, the metal being a so much better conductor of heat than the handkerchief, the heat passes from the coal to the metal direct, and the handkerchief has not time to become even scorched.

THE BURNED HANDKERCHIEF RESTORED.

Get a tinman to make a double canister with an opening at each end. This must so slide within a tin tube that either end can be concealed within it alternately. In this position it looks like an ordinary canister.

The interior is divided into two parts. In one put a piece of cambric made to look like a handkerchief. Borrow a cambric handkerchief, and say:

"Now, ladies and gentlemen, I shall burn this handkerchief to ashes, place them in this canister"—saying which you put it into the upper half of the tin—"and when I have uttered a spell it will be restored perfectly whole. Will the owner say what mark it has?"



While the audience are looking towards the owner, you turn the canister over, and push up the canister until the shoulder is on a level with the top of the tube. When the mark has been declared you take out

the cambric and pretend to verify the mark. You then put it in a candle flame, and when it has burned entirely to ashes put the ashes into the empty part of the canister, and shut it up and rapidly reverse it as you turn round to your audience, so that the handkerchief is uppermost. Then utter any nonsense you like, open the canister, and the handkerchief you take out is uninjured.

Horace Goldin

RICH AUNT: "You only visit me when you want money."
SPENDTHRIFT: "Well, I couldn't come much oftener, could I?"

"I NEVER saw such a chronic grumbler as Touch is."
"What's his latest grievance?"
"He found a half-sovereign this morning and is grumbling because a man to whom he owes seven shillings saw him pick it up."



By One Who Took Part.

revealed us—a group of men, black save for the crossbands of our haversacks, silent but for the impatient snap of a rifle bolt and the low voice of the subaltern with his map.

These are the times when a man's heart beats tumultuously, only because the woods at fifteen yards are a sealed book. Perhaps that ditch is full of eyes looking across rifle barrels at him even now.

"Listen! what's that?" a dropping fir-cone. "There! I saw him move!" . . . wind among the bushes.

As the twigs snap the officer clenches his teeth, breathless, for he wonders how far that sound may travel in this strange night-world, in which he is but a little child.

CRAWLING MID THE HEATHER.

Advancing again. The gloomy trees scatter on either hand, and in an instant the leading man is on his knees, crawling from tuft to tuft of stunted heather, and across stretches of sand.

Man by man the company drops down behind him. Someone's magazine strikes a flint, as he crawls rifle in hand. For a moment the line, like some fantastic giant insect of a hundred legs, pauses, and, convinced that it is not the enemy, again resumes its march.

Hist! What is that?

Every ear is strained in one direction. There is a dull report somewhere in the woods, followed by a rapid fusillade. It sounds very distant.

"All is fair in love or war." The lieutenant chuckles softly, for he knows that it is a corporal and one man firing crackers on the enemy's flank.

The time to strike is not far now.

We scramble desperately—and it seems like hours—until one sound resolves itself from among the thousand noises, which come only with the dark—a human voice, speaking as if from the ground on which we lie.

A hurried consultation—then the rush and the flash and crackle of a wavering volley. This is only an advanced screen of the enemy, but the woods are all awake now.

Here two men are locked together, the one struggling to disarm the other. The main body sweeps right over them and beyond.

NOTHING BUT THE RIFLES' CRACK.

Now for the supreme moment.

No one has seen the company that was ordered to support us. There is no time to waste.

We lie facing the rise of a little plateau, from whose bosom intermittent rifles flash. The whole air is torn with the fiendish "tack-tack-tack" of our fire. Still the supports give no sign.

Good Heavens! how long are we to lie here blazing at a masked enemy!

At last. . . "E. Company! now for them!"

The ragged extended line charges up as best it may, with that long cry, no open-throated cheer, which makes a soldier's blood turn suddenly cold, for it tells of men gone mad and the gleaming of bayonet steel.

All the while hungry tongues of flames have licked out from the hill crest—the enemy holds it in the hollow of his hand.

Suddenly a bugle screams the cease fire. "Let 'em alone! . . . Let 'em alone!" once and again.

The incessant crackle of rifle fire stops. We form on the hill top—sullenly, for we have lost the attack. Why, oh, why, hadn't those supports turned up! Victory was in our grasp. Where were they?

The captain in command comes up to explain. An old story; he had waited for his further orders and they never came.

We retreat.

Our boots are sodden, our puttees caked with bog-slime up to the knee, our hands are torn with brambles.

But in this fierce assault there are no fatal casualties, and there is the light of the guard-tent far away like a guiding star; it speaks of hot cocoa and bully beef.

For, after all, we are but a volunteer battalion, encamped upon the edge of Laffan's Plain.

WHY THE FISH DIDN'T BITE.

A True Little Angling Story.

In a Yorkshire town were two well-to-do and enthusiastic anglers. It came to their ears that in far-away Anglesey was a small and little-frequented lake, inhabited by trout of famous size. They had a few days' holiday in prospect, and decided to go.

It was as lately as August in the present year; the fly-fishermen's season was over, and our Bradford friends thought that they would send an agent in advance to ground-bait parts of the lake. For this purpose a trusty man was found among the workmen at a woollen factory.

He was supplied with two large boxes of maggots and some large corks, such as are used to float fishermen's nets at sea. He was instructed fully as to his duties; he was to stay at the village inn, to hire a boat, and, having scattered one-fourth of the bait in four separate places in the lake, he was to mark the spots by the corks tethered to the bottom by stones.

Glad to be released from work, and envied by his fellow-workmen, he entered with unfeigned pleasure upon his share of the projected expedition. In due course he reached the lake-side village, and passed a pleasant evening in the bar parlour talking to the farm-labourers in his broad Yorkshire dialect, or listening in wonderment to the strange Welsh tongue.

Without any concealment he explained the purpose of his visit, and from the accounts of the trout—great both in size and number—he was convinced that his morrow's work would be the first act in a sporting drama, which would end happily for his employers.

On the following day he lost no time in carrying out his orders. He hired a boat, scattered the maggots in four places, and attached the corks to stones with stout string. In a few hours the fish would no doubt gather for an unlooked-for and welcome feast of good things. He dined at the inn, told the landlord that two gentlemen would require rooms on the following day, and returned the same evening to Bradford.

He reported himself on his arrival, and added to the assurance that he had obeyed his instructions in all particulars the testimony of the yokels as to the number and size of the trout.

Our angling friends left the Yorkshire town in high spirits. They found all ready for their reception at their journey's end, and, as they took their evening meal in the inn parlour, whose windows looked out upon the lonely lake, they laughed to think of the jealousy of their brother anglers who should hear of their famous expedition.

The landlord confirmed the tidings they had heard. "There isn't a better little lake anywhere," he said, "and it's very little fished. You gentlemen should do really well to-morrow. Here's tight lines, and good-night."

He emptied his glass, and left his guests to once more congratulate one another on the good fortune which had brought them to such snug quarters, and the promise of such sport.

In the morning sun the lake, seen from the inn, shone like a mirror; its surface only broken by some duck swimming near the reeds. A keen eye might note black specks on the surface, and these were doubtless the marks set above what would now be feeding grounds for trout.

Breakfast was no sooner over than the anglers set out, each with a couple of rods and a plentiful supply of bait. The boat was anchored near the first cork, four baited hooks were lowered, and two pairs of eyes were riveted on the floats. Nothing happened. The morning wore away, but there was neither nibble nor bite.

It was with a sense of disappointment that our friends ate their sandwiches at mid-day, and it deepened as they changed their position during the afternoon. They had not a fish between them when they landed for tea.

Returning to the lake, they were aware of another boat on the water, and from the excited voices which they heard, as well as from the curved rods which they could see, they knew that their rivals were enjoying excellent sport. They moved from one station to another, but without success.

"Here's another" came across the water, and an outstretched net proclaimed the landing of another fine trout.

The successful fishermen were the yokels who had conversed with the workman in the inn. On his departure for Bradford they had made a note of the places where the maggots were, and had moved the corks. The unsuccessful ones said little of their experiences when they returned home; but the story leaked out, and they are on the look-out for a deaf mute who will not be afraid to ground-bait a small lake in Anglesey after dark next August.

DENTIST (to patient from the country): "Shall I give you gas, sir?"

"No, no. I'm for none o' these new-fangled inventions. Just gie me paraffin oil."

As he stands near the training ground on off days, the Muddled Oaf (now clear-eyed and clean-skinned) is as a lesser god to passing small boys, and an object of friendly interest to older admirers.

To the Mere Woman, however, he is just an ordinary-looking young man who casts a spell over her men-folk once a week, and lures them from their quiet hearths to join a throng of madly-cheering enthusiasts. She will see if his spell has any power over her on Saturday, for then the Blackhampton Rovers are to come, and she is to watch the game.

Saturday dawns raw and cold, and the Mere Woman gets out her warmest furs and shivers in anticipation of an uncomfortable afternoon.

Towards dinner-time, if there happens to be a casual aeronaut hovering over the city, he will wonder at the many converging lines of men, until he catches a glimpse of the famous Oaf colours fluttering over the grand stand. In their thousands they come, and the turnstiles admit them all too slowly.

Very soon the Mere Woman finds herself an ignorant and insignificant atom in a four-sided human sea.

Then she listens hastily to her escort's patient explanation of the main rules of the game. He breaks off when a low rumble swells round the field and becomes a mighty cheer as the players appear.

WHEN THEY ENTER THE FIELD.

They look anything but Muddled Oafs at present, and the Mere Woman wonders if they feel as did the gladiators of old when they heard the plaudits of the Roman thousands. Soon the game begins.

To her it is a medley of running, kicking, and a sort of head-kicking that makes her tremble until she is assured that it does not hurt them. There is one little black-eyed man who seems to be here, there, and everywhere at once, and whose manoeuvres draw yells of delight from the spectators, who, as one man, hail him as "Jimmy." He plays like a little demon, and is making a splendid charge, when a big opponent gets in his way, there is a collision, and Jimmy falls.

Immediately there is a lull in the cheering, a doctor hurries to his side, and presently the favourite is helped to his feet, pluckily refuses to leave the field, and the game proceeds.

The Oafs score! What a cry goes up as the ball touches the net! The surrounding hills catch up the roar and toss it about until it dies away in faint echoes.

Now the Rovers gird up their loins, and the Oafs are hard pressed. Thrills run through the Mere Woman, and, rising on her toes, she watches the struggle breathlessly, sinking back against her cavalier with almost a groan as a burly Rover drives the ball squarely into the net.

THE WINNING GOAL.

The excitement grows to fever-heat as "time" looms near, and the players set their teeth, and head and kick with a vigour and dash that cannot be surpassed. See! the Oafs are driving back the Rovers. They are getting near the net. There is a run, a kick, and the ball rises. In absolute silence the sphere is watched. True as a well-aimed bullet it speeds on, rides over the goalkeeper's head, and—wins the game!

The silence is shattered! Roar upon roar rises; a thunder of human sound, it swells, subsides, and swells again. There is a sudden strange shower of returning sticks, hats, and umbrellas, flung up by spectators.

The Mere Woman's cavalier discovers that he has flung his left-hand neighbour's cap in air, apologises, and is freely forgiven. She inwardly commands the prudence of his mistake.

When he turns to ask her if she has enjoyed the game her voice is husky, and she realises with a shock that she has helped to swell the cheer of victory. The spell has worked, and Mere Woman bows the knee to a Muddled Oaf!

The game is over, and the field discharges half-a-dozen streams of hoarse but jubilant men.

On Monday they foregather in workshop, factory, or office, and fight the battle o'er again, hastily dispersing when they hear the steps of the "boss." He, in his turn, passes to his sanctum, inquires his partner's opinion of Saturday's match, and opens his paper to see what the "rag" has to say about it. And during the week the Mere Woman discovers that one of her relations, who is an imitator of the Oafs, has, with Spartan contempt, been concealing sundry cuts and bruises received in his lesser match, and somehow she is more sympathetic than usual.

For she is inclined to think that the Oaf is not so black as he is—Muddled.



By a Mere Woman.

POOR BY CHOICE AT CHRISTMAS.

When "Chilly Poverty" is Wood and Welcomed.

CERTAIN persons dread the coming of Christmas, lest it should force them to be generous in spite of the meanness which is part of their nature. They would literally rather part with their heart's blood than with money for Christmas-boxes or spend it in entertaining their relations or friends. So they become, as far as they possibly can, miserably poor as each 25th of December looms near.

One old Scrooge, with many thousands in the bank, drew most of his money in the shape of rents from a large number of small flats and houses, let to very humble tenants. So terrified was he lest, if he stopped at home, he would be compelled to give presents to these tenants, that every Yuletide for years he disappeared in a mysterious fashion. He allowed it to be inferred that he was visiting friends.

In reality, he stole away to the East-end, where, grudging to disgorge a penny more than he could help, he spent the day of festivity in miserable lodgings, starving and shivering over a half-empty grate.

Animated by the same unamiable spirit, an old lady, who was blessed with numerous small nephews and nieces, and who during all the rest of the year was in the enjoyment of a very handsome competence, was invariably plunged into the depths of poverty just as Christmas Day was beginning to be talked about.

A CONVENIENT PRODIGAL SON.

She had possessed a prodigal son, who had betaken himself hurriedly to one of the Colonies. Popular opinion held that he was dead, but each year's end, as regularly as clockwork, his afflicted parent professed to receive from him an urgent appeal for a heavy sum, which was urgently required to release him from alarmingly pressing difficulties.

Compliance with these demands, she averred, swamped all her available capital, and made it impossible for her to even think of giving a solitary present much less a party. Nasty people hinted that there was something suspicious about the prodigal's annual resurrection; but he certainly saved his mother from wasting her money at a time when everybody else seemed to be spending theirs.

Some people deliberately make themselves poor at Christmas with the intention of gaining by it. A great deal of seasonable charity is in evidence, and none are more likely to get a good share of it than those who have actually or apparently met with dire misfortunes. And men who would, under ordinary circumstances, be termed respectable throw up their situations in the hope of getting something better by medium of Christmas charity.

WHEN IT PAYS TO BE WORKLESS.

"If you are out of work and down in the mouth at Christmas time, you might get a rich man to give you a good berth out of sympathy, while you wouldn't stand a chance if you went to him at an ordinary time and looking well off." So confessed one of these frauds, who, known to be at work in November, was met in December wandering about shabby and down at heel, and looking as if he had not eaten a square meal for weeks. Sometimes, of course, no better situation results, and the man who has made himself poor as a speculation is stranded. But this is a risk which has to be incurred.

Branching off to another phase of the subject, mention may be made of an interesting family which, paradoxically speaking, was fortunate in being unfortunate. The father was represented as "something in the City."

Each year, as Christmas approached, we fell on the household. The father lost his situation, and a stern and heartless creditor appeared on the scene and threatened to put the broker's man in possession.

What could the kind neighbours do but take compassion? The afflicted family were the recipients of many anonymous presents, and friendly invitations, and cheered up in the genial glow of sympathetic benevolence.

HURRYING ON BANKRUPTCY.

But alas for the guile of humanity! It was all a lie—a little comedy, repeated in a new suburb to which a move was made each year. If the father lost his situation it was because he wanted to, and the supposed inexorable creditor was a particular friend, who acted the part in return for a share of the presents which were calculated upon.

And there are other people who become poor by choice at Christmas. Notably those in difficulties, who know that a catastrophe in their financial affairs is inevitable, contrive to let it come about, and even precipitate it, at this season, so that they may have the chance of getting more lenient treatment from their creditors, and more general sympathy and offers of help, in consequence of the "Christmas" spirit in the air, than they would be likely to find at a more prosaic time. Nor must those who pretend to be poor for the sake of picking up Christmas bargains be forgotten. At the happy season the hearts of many shopkeepers melt toward those whom they regard as unhappy and unfortunate. Many a butcher or poulterer has given a splendid, compassionate bargain to some poverty-stricken man or woman who has come shopping on Christmas Eve.

Mean people have carefully dressed themselves in the worst old rags they could find, and made their appearance as miserable and forlorn as they could, and then, leaving behind them comfortable homes and plenty of money, have sallied out to steal a share of poor folk's Yuletide bargains, and have not been ashamed if some tradesman has made them practically a present of their Christmas dinner.

A LIVELY NIGHT.

How the Poet Got to Sleep.

Last night I lay upon my bed,
And vainly courted slumber.
At last, in desperation, I
Tried thinking of a number.

I thought by chance of sixty-three,
The number of my dwelling,
I doubled it, and added ten,
The total thereby swelling.

I multiplied by forty-five;
Being good at mathematics
Subtracted nine—then heard a noise
Like someone in the attic.

I rose in haste, and went upstairs,
To catch the rash intruders;
Though liberal, I'm in favour of
Protection from free-loaders.

But no, it must have been some trick
Of my imagination;
No one was there, so I went back
To bed—and calculation.

I started just where I left off,
And worked a sum appalling,
Which made me drowsy; when two cats
Commenced a cat-erwalling.

I spent an hour and a half
Expending sundry missiles—
Cold water, boots and furniture,
Oaths, shouts, and piercing whistles.

At last I turned their lovelorn lay
To something more like wailing;
But ere I could resume my task
The moon and stars were paling.

I left a million far behind,
But vainly courted Morpheus;
Because my next door neighbour is
An early morning Orpheus.

He started playing at half-past five.
Asleep, it wouldn't matter;
But, wide awake, it made me feel
As mad as any hatter.

I knocked upon our common wall;
Success took twenty minutes.
And then the choir of birds began,
The sparrows and the linnets.

I plugged my ears with cotton wool,
Used language free and shocking;
And just had gained the gate of sleep,
When wakened up by knocking.

"Get up, sir, please, I've called you twice;
It's nearly half-past eight, sir."
"What's matter? Oh, do go away!"
"Get up, or you'll be late, sir!"

I barked my shins against the bath,
And cut myself when shaving;
I reached the office very late,
By this time nearly raving.

But I shall have some sleep to-night;
The cats, I shall not hear 'em;
I bought some morphia, and a book
On the Binomial Theorem.

—O—O—O—

THE KID: "Why should they tell us there is a Santa Claus if there isn't?"
His Sister: "Mother and father want someone to lay the blame on if we don't get the presents we wanted."

—O—O—O—

EDITH (at tobacconist's): "I want a box of nice cigars."
Tobacconist: "What kind would you like, miss?"
Edith: "Oh, I am not particular! Have you any flavoured with violets?"

—O—O—O—

"It is difficult for a man to have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year as well," said the first philosopher.
"Oh!" remarked the second.
"Yes; because if he has a Merry Christmas, the bills will prevent the Happy New Year."

DETECTIVES FOR YULETIDE ONLY.

A Chance for the Amateur Crime Investigator.

By the irony of circumstances there is such a brisk demand for detectives of a sort at the season of peace and goodwill that people who have not the chance to follow the profession of their choice, and have to earn their livings in other walks of life during the remainder of the year, turn detectives during the latter part of December.

Busy shops need detectives during the Christmas sales. Shoplifters have to be watched for. Also, during the rush of the busy season the proprietors of shops have to take into their employ emergency assistants, and are in too much of a hurry to give time to the investigation of their characters beforehand. So these temporary hands have to be kept under secret surveillance in case they should prove dishonest.

A young fellow whose normal occupation was that of a clerk used to take a "week's holiday" at Christmas time that he might, in the guise of an extra shopwalker, keep a keen eye on the human tide which flowed in and out of a large emporium in London.

A bus conductor, with a remarkable talent for "spotting" thieves and other undesirables, found no difficulty in obtaining a remunerative engagement to act as an amateur detective at Christmas. Dressed in a showy uniform, and with a clever "get-up" that made him resemble an old soldier, he stood outside some mammoth stores.

IF HIS SUSPICIONS WERE AROUSED.

Nominally his sole duty was to open and shut carriage doors for customers, but he also looked at everybody who passed him, and if he saw a suspicious person making for the establishment he contrived to give a warning signal to an assistant stationed just inside.

The craving to figure as detectives is not confined to one class of the community. There was a lady who moved in the most exclusive society and a young gentleman who spent most of his time in wearing fashionable clothes and lounging about doing nothing. As regularly as Christmas came round these two, who were unaware of each other's existence, sought engagements in crowded shops, where, moving about and coming and going like ordinary customers, they exercised an extraordinary talent for detecting and frustrating thieves.

Plenty of other openings for detectives present themselves at Christmas. When large numbers of guests are entertained for Yuletide, country mansions and large town houses are full of priceless jewellery and other valuables. In many instances the hosts and hostesses are anxious to take all possible precautions to save their visitors from robbery. Hence, a detective is introduced into the house. Perhaps he comes in the guise of a new footman—perhaps he is nominally one of the guests.

GUARDING THE GUESTS' PROPERTY.

A very clever detective of this sort was a nursery governess, who abandoned her legitimate calling for a week or so each winter to enter upon a lucrative engagement, ostensibly as a lady's maid, but in reality to keep a watchful eye on the personal adornments of the lady guests staying under the roof of a millionaire.

And a man of good birth who had been reduced from wealth to earning his living as best he could was enabled once a year to resume his place among rich folk, and enjoy the luxury which had formerly been his greatest pleasure. He had a keenly-developed detective instinct, and every December he received an invitation from one of his afortime friends to pay a Christmas visit to some great house. Nominally, he was an honoured guest; in fact he was a private detective, employed to guard the property of the other visitors.

GOLD PLATE ON HIRE.

It is not uncommon for even very aristocratic people to hire gold and silver plate on which to give their guests their Christmas dinners, their private collection being unequal to the extra demand. The majority of such high-class borrowers are above suspicion. But it is unsafe to trust everyone in this wicked world. At least, this is the principle of some of the firms which let out valuable property at Christmas time. So they send detectives of their own to make sure that nothing goes amiss.

Naturally, an avowed detective hovering around the board would cast a damper over the most hilarious feast. Therefore, these firms have to be wise and wary in their choice of secret emissaries. The senior partner of one firm himself undertook the task, and, being a man of weight and solemnity, looked the image of the assistant butler whose place he borrowed.

Many citizens who go away with their families for Yuletide leave their houses locked up and deserted. They are often uneasy regarding the safety or otherwise of their possessions. This was the reason which led a strapping youth, who at other times was a useful if commonplace milkman, to turn detective on Christmas Eve, and spend the hours of darkness in watching houses which he had contracted to guard.

Another gentleman, by profession a bill-sticker, turned his talents to account in somewhat the same way. In order to divert suspicion from himself he assumed the character of a starving beggar, who was wandering about and skulking in doorways because he had no home to go to. So successfully did he play his part that one night a couple of Yuletide thieves, emerging from a house they had been rifling, engaged him to help them to carry their plunder. To their intense disgust he knocked one of them down and held on to the other while he yelled for the police.

HOW TO ENTER THE CONTEST TO-DAY.

Readers who wish to start the Competition now may obtain from their newsagents issues Nos. 854, 855 and 856 containing the first six sets of pictures, or they will be sent for 5d., post free, from the Publisher "Pearson's Weekly," Henrietta Street, London, W.O.

£500 A YEAR FOR LIFE.

WHICH WILL NOT BE DIVIDED.

Also **CONSOLATION GIFTS** to the **VALUE** of **£1,000** to be **DISTRIBUTED** as follows :

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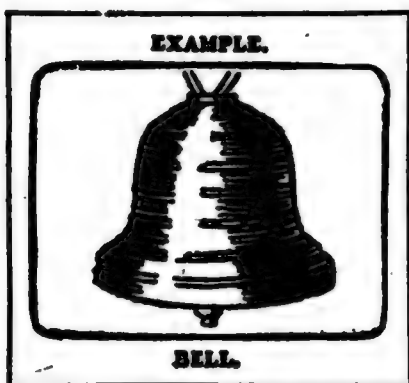
One Cash Gift of £25.

10 Cash Gifts of £5 each.

One Cash Gift of £15.

500 Cash Gifts of £1 each.

One Cash Gift of £10.



Conditions.

1. The surname must be clearly written under each picture in ink. (Use a fine pen.)
2. Only one surname is allowed under each picture.
3. No alterations are allowed in the surnames. If you have made a mistake in the spelling, cross the word out, and write it again.
4. As you fill up each weekly set of pictures, cut it out and keep it by you until you are told how and when to send it in.
5. Members of the same family may forward as many complete series of the pictures as they like. Each complete series will be accepted independently, and the sets composing it must be fastened together at the top left-hand corner. Proof of posting packets containing solutions to the pictures will not be accepted as proof of receipt.
6. The surname with the greatest number of letters, made up of the names or names (or words which have the same sound) of the object or objects depicted in each picture, is the correct solution, but if there are two or more of such surnames depicted in one picture with an equal number of letters, each will be counted correct.
7. No competitor may obtain the assistance of professional competition solvers, who send out circulars, or whose advertisements appear in the Press. Every person who enters for this competition may do so only on this understanding. The prize will not be paid to anyone who we find has violated this condition.
8. In the unlikely event of a tie, further pictures will be submitted to the tying competitors until one wins the first prize outright.
9. The first prize—that is, £500 a year for Life—will be payable monthly to the winner, who shall not be entitled to require that it be capitalised. Nor shall the winner be allowed to sell or pledge such monthly payment, and his receipt alone will be recognised.
10. All the surnames depicted in the sketches will be found printed in a list of surnames which we have compiled, and which will be sent free on receipt of a stamped, addressed wrapper. Apply to Room 7, Pearson's Weekly, Henrietta Street, London, W.O. Only surnames which appear in this list will be admitted.
11. You must sign your name and address in the space provided at the foot of this page.
12. The Editor's decision in all matters connected with this competition is final and conclusive, and competitors who enter must agree to abide by all these conditions.

No inquiries regarding the competition can be answered either personally or through the post.

Below you will find some pictures. Each of these pictures consists of a certain object or objects which, either singly or collectively, represent a surname.

What you have to do is to find the longest surname made up entirely from the names of objects depicted in each picture (or from words which have the same sound).

An "object" does not include sky or shading necessary for correct drawing.

Before you begin, examine the example shown, which will make the matter clear.

You have now to examine the pictures below, and discover the surname which each of them represents. When you have done this, write the names down in the spaces provided. Then fill in your name and address, cut across the page at the place marked, and keep this set of pictures by you until all the subsequent sets have appeared.

The prize of £500 a Year for Life will be paid to the competitor from whom the Editor of PEARSON'S WEEKLY actually receives the complete series of pictures containing the greatest number of correct solutions and fulfilling the conditions printed below.

A further sum of £1,000 will be divided in the following manner among those who come next: One Cash Gift of £250; One Cash Gift of £100; One Cash Gift of £50; One Cash Gift of £25; One Cash Gift of £15; One Cash Gift of £10; 10 Cash Gifts of £5 each; and 500 Cash Gifts of £1 each. No competitor will receive more than one gift.

CUT ACROSS HERE.

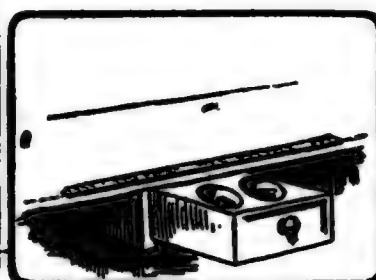
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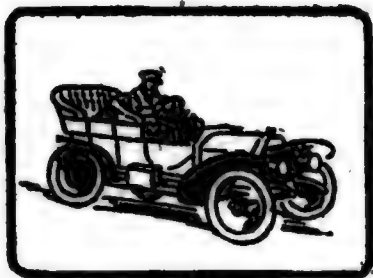
37.....



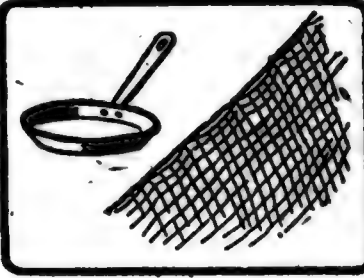
38.....



39.....



40.....



41.....



42.....

Another Set of Pictures will Appear Next Week.

Name.....

Address.....

My Strangest Xmas Congregation.

BY SOME WELL-KNOWN MISSIONARIES.

In the Japanese Netley. By the Rev. W. P. Buncombe.

The war with Russia was over; the last battles had been fought; peace had been made, and the more evident signs of a great struggle were fast being obliterated; but in the military hospitals the sick and wounded and maimed still lay in pain and helplessness.

In the permanent hospital in Tokyo my wife with Japanese helpers had been constantly visiting the wounded soldiers, and by means of singing and speaking the Gospel, and illustrating it with pictures and lantern slides, had endeavoured to bring peace and comfort to hearts which were often sad and dark and perplexed.

No it came about that when last Christmas (1903) came round, the question arose, "What could we do for the soldiers?" "Why, we will have a Christmas tree for them." The authorities are agreeable; we may have it in one of the large wards which happened to be empty. But there are 600 men, so we must take them in two divisions, the "inside wards" on one evening, and the "outside wards" on the next.

Help and funds were forthcoming, and the tree erected and decorated and dressed with a great variety of articles, useful, ornamental and amusing, and when illuminated with electric light would have delighted any juvenile company, even of English children. Numbered tickets for the drawing for the prizes and gifts had previously been distributed to each of the 300 soldiers in the inside wards, and when all was ready all who were able to leave their beds came in ward by ward and sat down on the blankets they brought, on the floor in Japanese fashion.

A strange Christmas congregation, indeed! The heroes of some of the biggest battles the world has ever seen; yet mostly with young boyish faces, without any trace of fierceness or cruelty, laughing, smiling, and as expectant as any schoolboys.

How they enjoyed the singing by some of our Sunday-school children; and how well and reverently they listened to a twenty-minute gospel address, and what fun and laughter there was over the distribution of the gifts!

Peals of laughter would greet a comrade who had drawn a doll; but the prize of all was a doll dressed as a hospital nurse—everyone seemed to want that gift.

All got something useful and amusing. Then a packet of cakes and a bag of oranges and apples were distributed to each.

A similar gathering took place the next night for the rest of the men. Every soldier in the hospital received a New Testament, hymn book, and Christian books and tracts.

That Christmas will never be forgotten by those men; it will be talked about in their distant country homes, and be the first piece of authentic information that many of those country folks will have had about the "Jesus-teaching."

Xmas Day in West Africa. By the Rev. J. McKay.

It was no frosty, snowy Christmas, such as we are in the habit of picturing at an ideal Christmas in England. The tropical sun shone from a cloudless sky.

There had been no rain for more than two months, and all vegetation was dried up in Oshogbo, a large town in the interior of Western Equatorial Africa. My wife and I were the only white people among the 50,000 dusky inhabitants of that town, and this was our first Christmas Day in the place.

But we were not left long without Christmas greetings. Before six o'clock in the morning the Bale (head chief) arrived to salute us for what he had heard was our "great day."

The service was to be at eight o'clock. The tropical sun does not favour mid-day services! We had no church, as we had only been in the town but a few weeks. In fact, we had no proper house, but were living in a native mud hut. The grass-thatched roof came down so low that it was necessary to bend down double in order to enter the house!

In front was an open space, and it was here we had our first Christmas service in Oshogbo.

A few grass mats were spread on the ground for the worshippers to sit on. Two or three chairs and a form accommodated the members of our household. A camp chair and a small camp-table did duty for pulpit and reading-desk. A baby-organ led the choir, which was composed of our own house boys and three students.

By degrees the congregation assembled. The first to arrive was a Christian man—a road-maker for

the Government, who was then at work on a new road in the neighbourhood. He was arrayed gorgeously, as became the day, in very full native-made trousers of bright blue plush, an English under-vest, and a cloth of yellow velvet worn across one shoulder! His wife followed him, carrying on her head his hymn and prayer books and cowries for the collection.

Next came a carpenter, with two or three lads, his apprentices, in the background. These were from the more civilised coast towns. All had made some attempt at European clothing.

Attracted by the singing and by the sight of white people, a large crowd of heathen soon assembled. There is no need to describe their costumes! They were certainly not over-dressed! A dirty cloth, dyed with the indigo dye of the country, sufficed for the elders, while the children were content to let nature go unadorned.

But all listened most attentively as they heard for the first time of the first Christmas Day, when the Son of God took man's nature upon Him, and was born of a virgin at Bethlehem.

That service was six years ago. To-day many of those same untaught heathen are meeting together to join intelligently in the service of the day, in a large and well-built church, in the erection of which they had the greatest share.

A Congregation of One. By the Rev. George Royds.

THE strangest congregation I ever saw consisted of one person—a doctor—who attended on a certain Sunday at the Mariners' Church, Port Louis, Mauritius.

I conducted the services and preached, and he duly took his part in the responses, and helped me to sing the hymns. He was also good enough to tell the bishop afterwards that he was very pleased he went, and that he thoroughly enjoyed the service.

I may say that as my church keeper was a Roman Catholic—a coloured Creole—he always made a point of going outside the church during service time, so that he did not make up two besides myself.

Among Reformed Cannibals. By the Rev. John Howell.

A LITTLE brick church on the Congo, with a setting of tropical verdure overshadowed by feathery palms and a temperature of 120. Here in our congregation are five stalwart cannibal Basokos from near to Stanley Falls, to whom the Congo Free State sent a white officer and some soldiers some little while ago to enforce the rubber tax.

Officer and soldiers were, however, promptly killed and eaten, and a desire expressed for more.

Before us are Bangolas, also cannibals—men of the tribe who fought Stanley a running fight for miles, crying "Nyama, nyama" (meat, meat), when he first crossed Africa. These as they sing their Christmas carol disclose their pointed teeth, reminding us that not long ago they were noted for their cruelty and ferocity. Also Ngombis from the great rubber forest, stealthy as snakes, agile as a monkey, ready to attack from beneath a bush or from overhanging tree.

We have Mongoos from the Equator, Bopotos from mid-river, sturdy little Congos from the neighbourhood of the great cataracts, and Bakekes—the few of the Congo. Many tribes from many and distant places, speaking different languages; to these was told the story of the Child King, heralded by Angelic song.

Three languages were used that Christmas Day in speaking to us, my strangest, Christmas congregation.

Preaching to Lepers. By the Rev. E. Guilford.

"CHRISTMAS comes but once a year. When it comes it brings good cheer."

And so thought the more than 200 inmates of the Leper Asylum at Tarn Taran, in the Punjab.

For several weeks previously the excitement in preparing for this annual festival has been growing, until it culminates in the great feast on Christmas Eve provided by kind Christian friends.

The course of the excitement can be traced on the walls inside and outside the houses of the lepers, in the grotesquely wonderful efforts to produce effects of high art with simple paints in all colours of the rainbow with no other instruments than their poor stumps, left by the dropping off of their hands.

Out of those have been gathered the Christmas, to the number of 170 in all, who have formed my strangest congregation from year to year, and who are representative of all the castes found in the asylum. There

is Prabh Das, the erstwhile fierce little Gurkha soldier, who left his regiment when the fell disease first declared itself on him, and found his way to the Tarn Taran Asylum without telling any of his comrades the cause of his sudden departure.

Then there is Nawab, some time ago a follower of the Prophet of Arabia, but who on falling ill was totally neglected by his co-religionists, and on being nursed tenderly by the Christians was won over to the faith of the latter. Next to him is seated, with a radiance of peace on his face, Ramdas, the poor religious mendicant, who for thirty years wandered from shrine to shrine in India, hoping to find healing of body—but most of all that which would bring peace to his mind—till he came to this asylum, and found the latter in Him who said, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you."

Sitting in new found peace by his side is a low-caste Chura, "Mohan," whose shadow even in the days of mental darkness Ramdas would have thought sufficient to pollute him. As the preacher reads over again those wonderful words, which have brought joy to myriad hearts down through the ages, since they first broke the stillness of the air on the first Christmas morn, and gave joy to the shepherds of old, a wonderful light is seen to irradiate their poor, disfigured faces, while the sightless eyes of those of their number, from whom the fell disease has shut out the light of day, are seen to turn upwards as though gazing upon that wondrous flood of glory.

The Service commences, and as they hobble on their poor stumps, where the feet once were, and take their place at the Communion rails, the strangest and most pathetic sight of all is seen. But few hands can be stretched out in response to the words: "Take and eat this," and the bread must be dropped into the mouths of those humble followers of Jesus and poor wrecks of humanity, while an ordinary sick-room feeding boat must take the place of the chalice to convey the symbol of the blood outpoured to their lips.

In the Tarn Taran district there are other congregations strange, and with a strange history; but of all, the one at the Leper Asylum, that House of Living Death, is the strangest!

GEORGE: "Ah, Lily dear, this will be the jolliest Christmas I've ever spent. Now that we're engaged, I think only of the future."

LILY: "Do you? Well, at this time of the year I think only of the present."

HOSTESS (at the Christmas party): "Miss Robinson has no partner for this waltz. Would you mind dancing with her instead of with me?"

HAWKARD: "On the contrary, I shall be only too delighted."

KEPT UP THE DECEPTION.

CHRISTMAS week was drawing to a close, and someone asked a child:

"Did you have Santa Claus at your house?"

"Yes," was the answer.

"Do you believe in Santa Claus?"

"No," said the lad, "and I don't think my little sister does, but we didn't want to disappoint mamma!"

"Going to do anything interesting this Christmas, Bagby?"

"Yes; I've persuaded my wife not to invite all our relatives to dinner, just to see if some of them won't have originality enough to invite us."

"No," he said, "I'm not sure whether my wife's Christmas gift was meant to please me or to humble my pride."

"What did she give you?" asked his friend.

"Well," was the reply, "she had a crayon portrait of me done by an amateur artist."

Forty Famous Funny Songs.

A collection of all the famous old comic songs, among which are:

Villains and His Dinah	A Little Peach in an Orchard
The Perfect Cure	Grew
The Bogie Man	Dere's One More Ribber for
Wait for the Waggon	to Cross
Rattle Dazzle	The Captain and his Whiskers
Down Went McGinlay	The Spider and the Fly
The Little Brown Jug	The Dutchman's Little Dog

NOW ON SALE. ONE SHILLING.

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An evening's amusement for the clever and busy fingers of the home milliner—see Xmas Number of HOME NOTES. Price 2d.

"Well—and what do you think of Diana?"

Ruth gazed admiringly at the radiant figure of her sister.

"She is the queen of grace and beauty," she replied. "If you are her counterpart, Grace, I do not wonder that the Ephesians worshipped her with such devotion."

The fair girl bent her shapely head in acknowledgment of the sincere flattery. She had been well named Grace. And to-night she appeared as the very perfection of sweet stateliness and wondrous womanhood. She was dressed for a fancy ball, and had chosen her character well. A little daringly perhaps, but the effect amply justified the conception.

Suddenly a shadow passed across the beautiful face, and her dark eyes rested compassionately on her sister. "Oh, I wish you were coming, too!" she murmured plaintively. "I cannot bear to leave you. Even now I will put off these flimsy fineries for my old dress and sit here beside you if you but bid me, Ruth."

The invalid's eyes filled with sudden tears. "Hush!" she said gently. "That would make me miserable. I shall find ample pleasure in the thought that you are having a nice time and winning the admiration your loveliness deserves."

Their lips met in a sweet sisterly kiss of mutual understanding. A soft pink blush stole into the face of the beautiful Diana. Ruth saw and rightly interpreted it. Grace had not dressed with such minute care for the purpose of attracting admiration from all.

One only out of the scores of guests and dancers with whom she was to mingle that night had been in her thoughts while she robed herself in those dazzling draperies. It was he who had complimented her by suggesting the character of Diana.

But the blush faded in a moment. There were other things to be remembered that night. For many weary months her sister had been an invalid, and of late she had developed symptoms that filled the ever-watchful Grace with alarm.

To-night an opportunity would be afforded her of discovering the true character of these developments. Dr. Arthur Lomax, the eminent physician and specialist, would be among the guests. She had already been introduced to him, and he would be sure to speak to her. She would lead him into conversation—perhaps they might even wander into the conservatory—and she would plead for the truth about her sister.

He was so much older than she, and she felt instinctively that she might trust him. She liked to see that grave smile upon his face and hear the strong, deep tones of his voice. Perhaps he would remove her fears. She hoped so. For then she could forget for a little space the anxieties that oppressed her and wander among the gay throng of dancers until—Once more the colour dyed her lovely cheeks, and, bestowing on her sister another affectionate caress, she left the room.

Captain Roland Whyte, of the 2nd Life Guards, tossed the stump of his cigar into the road and passed up the red-carpeted steps of the great house into the brilliantly-lit hall.

Gaily-dressed men and women thronged the broad oak staircase, and he passed on into the spacious rooms, where the dancers were already moving gracefully to the rhythm of a military band. Pausing on the threshold, he glanced from group to group as though in search of one he wished to meet. But he was disappointed.

The spectacle before him was enthralling. Many of the fancy dresses compelled his admiration. But the form he sought was not there.

Some of his most intimate acquaintances greeted him with their usual cordiality. He was a favourite with both sexes, and a splendid type of stalwart, sinewy manhood. His clear-cut, handsome face and deep grey eyes were the secret admiration of many a fair dancer in that gay throng. Presently he met a brother officer, and the two began to converse.

"Hullo, Whyte; you're late! What do you think of the show?"

The Captain once more let his eye wander among the dancers.

"Rather a pretty picture," he said.

His companion laughed. "But you haven't seen the queen of the evening; she impersonates the goddess Diana."

A wave of pleasure coursed through the Captain's veins. So she had followed his suggestion. Surely that augured well for his success in the stake he was about to cast! To-night he would declare his love and ask her to be his wife. To-morrow would be too late. His regiment was ordered away on active service, and he wished, above all things, to carry with him into the field the sweet certainty that she loved him and would wait till he returned.

The dance ended and another began, but still she did not come. He had sought no partner, and wandered about in search of the fair Diana. At last he turned into the conservatory.

Presently the sound of voices fell on his ear. He went on. The ruby glow of fairy-lamps fell softly upon two figures alone. One was Diana. Her eyes were wet with recent tears. But now a radiant smile suffused the eloquent face and transfigured it as he had never before seen the face of any living woman.

But as he looked he felt his heart sink with hopeless misery and defeat. Fool that he had been to fancy that she loved him! There she stood—her trembling hand resting caressingly upon another man's arm, her happy, tear-dimmed eyes fixed steadfastly on his quiet, grave face.

What greater proof could he have that he, a poor obscure captain in the Guards, was no more to her than a mere passing acquaintance whose society she tolerated for her own amusement? True, she had so far noticed him as to carry out his suggestion in the choice of her character. But that was nothing more than a tribute to his own instinctive knowledge of what her beauty well deserved.

MARS AND DIANA.

By WALTER J. MOWBRAY.

He did not know the man with whom she conversed so earnestly—for whom those happy tears had been shed. Yet what mattered it? It was enough that he had lost the prize on which he had set his heart.

With a deep sigh, he turned and went softly out of the dim conservatory. For his own peace of mind he would do well to avoid her. To-morrow he would say farewell to England for many a long and weary month. Perhaps he would never return. Again—what mattered it? And so he went away.

Geoffrey Garland turned over his correspondence with a nervous hand. Few business letters were directed to his private house. But one or two—of more than general importance—were sent so as to reach him before he went down to the City.

His daughter Grace watched him furtively. Ruth's breakfast had been sent to her room, and father and daughter were alone.

"What a slave you are to that horrid business!" she said, with assumed gaiety. "Your coffee is quite cold. Let me give you another cup."

She rose to do so, and he lifted his head. A smile crossed his haggard face as his eye rested on the fresh, sweet countenance of his daughter. The sight always did him good, and he thought how like her mother she was—the wife he had lost more than eight years before.

"Don't accuse me of that," he said. "It is not for yourself I toil and think, and risk my very all."

He had meant to reassure her that it was for her and Ruth he worked so unceasingly, but his words conveyed another meaning.

"Risk your all!" she repeated. "Oh, father, you do not mean that you are launching on a sea of speculation where there are too many wrecks already!"

He tried to laugh. But she detected a nervous tremor of the hand that held his cup and an uneasy restlessness in the grey eyes that filled her with foreboding.

"It's all safe enough, my dear," he said. "Can't you trust your old father's sagacity?"

For a full minute Grace was silent. Then she went across to her father's chair, and, putting both white hands appealingly on his shoulder, looked searchingly into his careworn face.

"Father," she said gently, "you are hiding something from me. I do not ask you to tell me what it is. For weeks you have looked like one who walks in fear of disaster. All I ask is that you will never act without first thinking of Ruth. You and I are bound to her by every tie of love and duty. Three months ago I went to a ball at Lady Grainger's. Dr. Lomax was there, and I met him in the conservatory. He urged upon me the absolute necessity of shielding Ruth from all anxiety or care. Any shock or secret grief would instantly strengthen a disease which with good nourishment and freedom from all care will slowly diminish and disappear. Think, then, of her in all you undertake. Her very life is in our hands, and we must never forget the responsibility."

Her earnest face looked very beautiful and the clear eyes full of tenderness and love as she stood there by her father's side. But his eyes refused to meet her own, and something like a groan escaped his lips.

At that instant there came a tap at the door, and a telegram was brought in. Geoffrey Garland tore it open and glanced at the contents. Then he put one hand convulsively to his heart and seemed to reel where he stood.

"Ruined!" he gasped. "Brandy! My heart again!"

As swift as light Grace was across the room. In a moment she was forcing the spirits between his clenched teeth. But the shock had been too great. In five minutes Geoffrey Garland was dead. Stricken as she was with grief, the weeping girl remembered Ruth.

With a few peremptory words she gave her orders. Her sister must not know. Sooner or later the truth must be told. But not now—not now. On that she was resolved.

Ruth Garland looked up from her couch.

Are you going to another ball," she asked, with a smile, "or are you merely reviving old memories?"

There was a tinge of colour in her sister's cheek as she understood the question. Grace had been busy all the evening. She had taken Diana's robe from the drawer where it had long lain neatly folded and shaken out the full, sweeping folds.

"You're an inquisitive little creature," she said, with affected gaiety. "But you have not guessed rightly."

She crossed over and knelt down at her sister's side. "Do you think you could bear the whole truth, dearest?" she asked caressingly. "You are stronger now, and must soon understand all that is before us."

"You do try to spare me the cares that burden you," Ruth said, with a sigh. "But are you sure that you succeed, dearest? For a long time you hid our father's death, and when you told me—little by little—I knew that your silence had been for my sake. But when we left the old house and came here I knew at once all that it betokened. I knew that we were poor."

"How could I repay so sweet a devotion by proving the futility of all you endured for my poor sake? So I, too, had my little secrets, and I grew quite brave. And now the prospect is still darker. I have seen how your music pupils are falling off. Your resources are nearly at an end. Yet your fear is for me—not for yourself. Oh, Grace, I am not worth such love! But look! I am growing stronger day by day. I feel a new life springing up in

me. Perhaps it is born of your courage and loyalty. Soon I shall be able to fight the battle with you."

She had risen from the couch, a flush upon her face.

"Dearest," she said at last, "you may know much, but you do not know all. We have no money, and our situation is desperate. But for your words just now I would not have told you this."

"Well," Ruth asked, "and is the lovely robe of the fair Diana connected with our present difficulties?"

Grace nodded.

"I am going to sit for—a picture. There was no other way, Ruth, dear, and I was getting desperate. I remembered the ball, and the remarks of the people there about my representation of Diana. One of the gentlemen guests was an artist, and I overheard one little remark of his. To-day I remembered it—and—forgive me—I went to him. He says he is more than willing to paint the picture—and I shall earn some money to keep us from want."

Lieutenant-Colonel Whyte sat in the smoking-room of his friend and host, Sir Robert Carlisle. The war was over. The name of Captain Roland Whyte had been mentioned in dispatches and strongly recommended for promotion. His gallantry in the field had, in the opinion of some, amounted almost to recklessness. But his reward had come. His promotion had appeared in the GAZETTE, and he was soon to receive the Victoria Cross. Sir Robert was proud of his friend's exploits, and was never tired of his society.

"Oh, I say," he said, when their cigars were finished, "you haven't seen the picture-gallery. I've picked up one or two new things this season. Come and see."

The young soldier followed him listlessly. He had been thinking of a page in his past career. Where was she? He had sought for her everywhere, but without success. The news of her father's ruin and death—of her poverty and removal to town—had come to him like a shock. Oh, if he could but find her!

The voice of his host recalled him to the present. They were already in the gallery. Sir Robert was pointing to a picture that hung upon the wall.

"Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" he said. "Look at her, my boy, and tell me what you think of her. I bought the picture last month from Vanbrugh Dana. Cost me a cool thousand."

Roland lifted his eyes. Then he almost reeled where he stood. For a long time he could not speak. There she stood in all her matchless loveliness—the girl who had taken his heart by storm—the girl he would have given all he had to find. Just as she was that night she stood and looked at him from the glowing canvas. Her beauty, her grace, the calm, sweet look in her deep grey eyes—all appealed to him as they had ever done. Then he turned suddenly.

"Did you say Vanbrugh Dana sold you this?" he asked in a sharp, incisive voice. And then, becoming aware of the curious expression on his companion's face, he added: "You must forgive me, Carlisle, but I know the lady, and wish to find her. I have already spent some weeks in the search. Now a mere chance has given me a clue."

Sir Robert nodded. But he could tell no more than that he had purchased the picture from Vanbrugh Dana. So that very afternoon found the young officer speeding up to town. The artist was in his studio, and readily told all he knew of the girl who had posed to him for the picture of Diana. She lived with her sister in a street in Chelsea.

In half an hour Roland was at the address. An untidy maid-of-all-work answered his knock, and informed him that Miss Garland was at home. He sent up his card and waited with feverish impatience till the slipshod messenger returned. Then he was ushered up two flights of stairs and into a small sitting-room on the second floor.

The door closed behind him, and he saw her standing irresolute in the centre of the floor. There was a heightened colour in her cheek that she could not keep back. Surprise, pleasure, hope—all three were clamouring within her. But she beat down the growing confusion and extended to him her hand. He took it and looked deep into her eyes. He had waited so long that he could wait no longer. Even the preliminary conventionalities were forgotten.

"Oh, Grace," he said, "I have hunted for you everywhere! I was a fool that night at Lady Grainger's. I had gone there on purpose to ask you one question. For more than a year I had loved you, but you seemed so far above me in all things that I had not dared. And then the regiment was ordered away, and I could keep silence no longer. I sought you in the conservatory—determined to put my fate to the test and so on and the suspense. I found you there—your hand upon another man's arm, your eyes full of happy tears, your whole face aglow with interest. It was like a sword-thrust, and I went away."

"And now—now I have come back to find that all my suspicions were unfounded. I had thought you married long ere this. And you are free. Oh, Grace, can you give me the love I ask? I know all, dearest—all that you have undergone. Come to me and forget all save that I love you. Your sister shall be my sister, and we will both devote ourselves to her recovery. Come, and let there be no more shadows in our lives and hearts."

For a moment she did not move. But love was urging her, and she could not resist. So she crept into his strong arms, and found there the rest for which she had prayed so long and so fervently.

"Did you come out well on Christmas morning, Tommy?"

"Yes, sir. I got more things than any of my brothers or sisters."

"Indeed! How did that come about?"

"I got up two hours before they did."



By an Ex-Broker's Man.

EVERYBODY appreciates Christmas—more or less. Everybody has his or her particular reason for doing so. And some of these reasons are very peculiar indeed.

I've retired from the business now, and I'm not sorry for it, I can certainly assure you. I suppose that as long as this world is what it is people will have to be sold up; but I don't want to have anything more to do with it, thanks. Apart from anything else, my professional duties as a broker's man used to completely spoil Christmas for me. Some chaps wouldn't have minded, perhaps, but I couldn't be happy myself after I'd helped, no matter how unwillingly, to make other people extra miserable.

It may come as a bit of news to you that Christmas is a good time for Shylock—for landlords with rent overdue, for all sorts of creditors, and for moneylenders, and especially for those landlords, creditors, and moneylenders who have dealings with the poorest class of people.

MORE WORK ABOUT THEM.

For, you see, however hard up and wretched a family may be during the rest of the year, it generally manages to get something extra for Christmas. Perhaps there's extra work for a man at Christmas, or, if not, their relations or friends help to make things more cheerful, or charitable organisations lend a hand.

So it happens that families who, through misfortune or poverty, haven't a penny to pay their rent or their debts at ordinary times, are frequently a bit better off at Christmas. Shylocks get to know this—and they don't waste the information for want of using it.

One landlord I knew of had a lot of very poor tenants. Many of them simply couldn't help getting into arrears with their rents, for life was a continual struggle for existence for all of them. He was very forbearing from January to November, because he knew pretty well that it wasn't worth while being anything else.

TAKING AWAY THEIR XMAS DINNER.

But he knew that the chances were that all his tenants would have something extra for Christmas. Acting on this idea, he used to send the bailiff I worked for round on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day itself.

Did I like it? Not much. How would you like to knock at the door of a little house, and take possession of the few shillings a starving family had scraped together in the hope of getting about their only decent dinner of the whole year?

I've had to do that before now, and I can tell you I've felt a beastly sneak after the money has been taken; I've left followed by the dumb despair of some white-faced, starving father and mother and the reproach of some hollow-eyed children. It hasn't made my own goose taste any sweeter, you can take that for granted.

There were two other landlords I had to work for who turned Christmas to account. One of them depended on Christmas presents. He knew that a lot of very poor people get really valuable presents sent to them at Christmas—and not unfrequently the presents are a lot more valuable than their recipients guess.

SEIZING VALUABLE PRESENTS.

I remember once that I was left in possession of a little house, the tenant of which was an old gentleman who had come down in the world after being in the Indian Civil Service. He owed a few pounds rent, and his furniture wasn't worth sixty shillings, as far as I could judge. I was put in two days before Christmas, and I wondered why on earth the landlord had bothered to levy a distraint on such an apparently hopeless place.

But he knew what he was about. On Christmas Eve the old gentleman received some presents from friends in India—lacquer work and other curiosities, and a silver idol—the image of an ugly little demon, which I thought uncommonly like the landlord.

The landlord got hold of everything, of course, and it was clear to me that he had reckoned on these presents turning up. Another Christmas time my governor, the bailiff, took possession of a cashmere shawl, worth at least £40, which had been sent by a sailor son to his widowed mother. The poor old lady owed two quarters' rent, and her Christmas present liquidated the debt.

The third landlord calculated on Christmas time. He didn't need telling that nobody is as kind to the poor as the poor themselves. He had a lot of small

houses in a poverty-stricken neighbourhood, and he took it for granted that if he put in the brokers on some unlucky families at Christmas time the neighbours were almost certain to club together to help to get the unfortunate ones out of their difficulties.

At ordinary times, probably, the neighbours would have been too hard up themselves to have done anything. But I've known a dozen poor families sacrifice their Christmas dinners to help a family to pay me out and save their little home at Christmas.

Moneylenders put the screw on at Christmas. They take it for granted that one of their victims, when threatened with ruin if he doesn't pay up, has more chance of finding sympathy and help among his relations and friends amidst the jollity and generosity of Christmas than he would have at any other time of the year.

"WHAT'S a good cure for toothache?"

"Walk about half-way to the nearest dentist's."

"So he gave you a dog?"

"Yes," answered the man who can be sarcastic at times.

"He must like you."

"Well, I'm not sure whether he likes me or whether he doesn't like the dog."

AN UNPLEASANT SURPRISE.

It was a happy and jolly party of confirmed bachelors that gathered round the festive board in a certain club on Christmas Day. After the time-honoured courses of turkey, roast beef, and such like had been dealt with in the usual way, a large cracker was placed on each plate with a care that suggested that each cracker had been selected specially for the guest before whom it was placed.

A rollicking member held out one end of his cracker to his opposite neighbour at the table, and, bang! out fell a piece of paper, which the recipient looked at and fell back in his chair with a gasp.

"What is it? A bank-note?" cried the guests.

"No, bother it! It's a writ of old Aaron's!" roared the unhappy recipient. "I've been dodging him for six weeks, but he's scored at last. But in such a way! Hang him, he deserves to be—"

"Paid," suggested a member.

"I THOUGHT Newrich was going to build a new house?"

"He had some notion of doing it, but he found he could spend more money by altering up his old one."

HOSTESS: "Now, Mr. Spooner, won't you sing us something?"

Spooner (modestly): "Oh, I shouldn't like to—after all those good singers."

Hostess (wishing to put him at his ease): "Ah, but we like a change sometimes, Mr. Spooner!"

"THERE is something," he said, "that I have wanted to tell you for a long time, but—"

"Oh, Bertie," she said, blushing sweetly, "not here in the car before all these people. Wait. Come this evening."

"It's merely that you have a streak of soot down the middle of your nose, but I couldn't for the life of me get a word in till just now."

SATISFIED AT LAST.

A GENTLEMAN, in whose eye the light of humour twinkled, sat at the hotel table, tucked his napkin under his chin, picked up the bill of fare, and began to study it intently. Everything was in restaurant French, and he didn't like it.

"Here, waiter," he said sternly, "there's nothing on this I want."

"Isn't there nothin' you would like for dinner, sir?" inquired the waiter politely.

"Have you got any sine qua non?"

The waiter gasped.

"No, sir," he replied.

"Got any bona fide?"

"No, sir, we haven't."

"Got any tempus fugit?"

"I reckon not, sir."

The waiter was edging off.

"Got any sine die?"

The waiter's face showed some signs of intelligence.

"Seems like I heard of that, sir," and he rushed out to the kitchen, only to return empty-handed.

"We ain't got none, sir," he said, in a tone of disappointment.

"Got any mal de mer?"

"N-no, sir."

The waiter was going to pieces fast.

The humorous gentleman was as serene as a May morning.

"Got any vice versa?" he inquired again.

The waiter could only shake his head.

"No. Well, maybe you've got some beef and cabbage and apple tart?"

"Indeed we have, sir," exclaimed the waiter, in a tone of the utmost relief, and he fairly flew out to the kitchen.

DECLINED WITHOUT THANKS.

Xmas Presents that are Not Wanted.

THOUSANDS and thousands of pounds are thrown away yearly in Christmas presents which are of no earthly use to their recipients, and all because the givers won't take a minute's trouble to consider what will be suitable, nor exercise the slightest originality in choice. They leave their shopping till the last minute, and then rush out and buy the first thing that offers.

Last Christmas a poor clergyman's wife received from a rich friend in town a magnificent piece of Oriental embroidery, gorgeous in crimson and gold, with a kindly hope that she could use it for a Sunday dress! The poor lady smiled grimly as she laid the present away. A pair of new boots or a piece of black silk, now—either would have been invaluable.

In another case, a would-be philanthropist, also of the fair sex, sent a poor old cottage woman a beautifully bound copy of Milton's poems. That the latter could barely spell out her Bible with the aid of her spectacles never seems to have occurred to the sender; nor that a pound of tea would have been much cheaper and infinitely better appreciated.

"Old Squire," he was always very good to me. 'Alf a ton o' coals an' beef an' puddin' I always 'ad at Christmas, an' I don't reckon as Master Richard'll forget me."

THE WRONG SORT OF PRESENT.

So said an elderly labourer a little before Christmas two years ago. The poor old chap was past work, and his wife was dead; but with the aid of small contributions from his children and a couple of shillings a week from the parish he managed to keep body and soul together.

Since the previous Christmas the old master had died, and his son reigned in his stead. A good fellow enough, but rarely at home.

Christmas came, and with it no coals, no beef, no pudding. Instead, a small parcel. It contained a very handsome silver-mounted pipe in a case, "with best Christmas wishes from Mr. Richard."

The poor old man, who had never smoked anything but a penny clay in his life, put the briar on the chimney-piece and looked at it. He hadn't any tobacco to fill it, even if he had dared smoke it. His Christmas dinner that year was some soup from the vicarage and a dish of boiled potatoes—nothing else.

A certain clubman used to do his Christmas shopping by proxy, sending his man round the shops with a list. An incident happened, which cured him of this habit. A few days after one Christmas he received a parcel containing three novels, which can only be described as "sensational." Inclosed was a furious letter from a maiden aunt. The books had been sent to her by a blunder on the part of the deputy, and the old lady cut him out of her will in consequence.

A COSTLY XMAS PUDDING.

Sending presents to friends abroad is a matter requiring a little consideration. People are apt to forget that there is a heavy duty on imports in most of our colonies as well as in foreign countries.

A man in Bulwago received last Christmas a hamper containing plum pudding and other seasonable fare. The duty on the pudding was a shilling a pound, and on the rest of the food in proportion. The poor fellow had to pay twenty-three shillings duty for his hamper and nearly the same amount in carriage. He has begged his friends not to send him another this year.

Some people who have friends abroad try to smuggle presents out to them. Gloves are sent wrapped in newspapers, and silk ties between the leaves of magazines or calendars. But the Postal Customs authorities are pretty smart. Not much passes them, especially in New York, and the sender feels a fool if he gets a letter of thanks explaining that the writer has had to pay double the duty, or nearly twice the original cost of the present.

AMERICAN GROCERS DON'T WANT TIES.

Speaking of America, it has become a custom to give Christmas presents of knitted ties to grocers' assistants. One unfortunate clerk in Bayonne, New Jersey, received no fewer than thirty-two ties one Christmas, all of them of a brilliant crimson hue.

Before the next Christmas a meeting was called of the Grocery Clerks' Association, and a resolution was passed unanimously that "Members of this association discovered accepting ties from customers at Christmas be fined ten dollars for each offence."

These home-made presents are an abominable nuisance in this country as well as in the States. Knitted ties of outrageous colours, crocheted bed socks of the hardest wool, horrible chair backs, ghastly little paintings perpetrated by amateur artists, and flimsy articles of chip carving—nearly all of them are promptly consigned to the cupboard or lumber room.

Why on earth one cannot send presents of money, and let the friend buy what he or she likes, goodness only knows. If you know a person well enough, you may give him a horse or a grand piano; but you mustn't send a cheque, except to a relative. It is a ridiculous convention, and one which inevitably results in each Christmas increasing our menagerie of white elephants.



Ask the first acquaintance you meet in the street: "How many men would be kings if they had crowns offered to them?" The answer would probably be: "All of them, without an exception." And if that were the answer it would be a wrong one.

Men have, ere this, preferred to remain plain "Misters" rather than be burdened and worried with the heavy glories and responsibilities of Royalty. Among these was no less a person than the late Mr. Gladstone, who, had he wished, could have died, not plain William Ewart Gladstone, at Hawarden, but William I., King of the Hellenes, at Athens.

Greece was for centuries under the crushing heel of the Turk and a part of the Sultan's Empire. But at last, after a heroic struggle, independence was won, and Capodistrias was elected President of Greece. But he was not popular, and in 1832 was assassinated.

Then the Greeks decided on having a King of their own. They had previously practically offered the crown to the famous poet, Lord Byron, who had helped them to fight for their independence, but who died before he could accept. They now chose Prince Otho of Bavaria. Otho's reign was a very uncomfortable one for everybody all round, and finally he went home. Then the Greeks looked about for a new sovereign.

They first of all elected Queen Victoria's second son, the late Duke of Edinburgh. The prince could not accept, as by doing so he would have offended foreign Powers. So the Greeks went begging for a King. They plainly hinted that they would like Mr. Gladstone, but he preferred to be Prime Minister of England.

LORD BEACONSFIELD REFUSED A KINGSHIP.

Then they cast longing eyes on Mr. Disraeli—for the great "Dixie" had not then been created Earl of Beaconsfield. He refused, but for pretty much the same reason as his Liberal rival.

The crown was temptingly dangled before the late Earl of Derby, but he did not care to give up his English peerage and his princely home at Knowsley for the throne in a classed land—especially as he was openly sceptical as to whether he would be allowed to sit on the said throne for long.

The Great Napoleon gave away crowns. Many men fought and scrambled for them; only one man is known to have refused one. This was the great Hungarian magnate, Prince Esterhazy. Hungary is, of course, part of the Austrian Empire, and when the terrible Corsican invaded Austria and took Vienna for the second time in 1809, he wished to weaken his enemies by setting the Austrians and Hungarians against each other.

With this object in view he proposed to establish Hungary as a separate kingdom, and offered the crown to Esterhazy. The Prince scornfully refused it, and as a consequence had to flee for his life.

COVERED WITH PRECIOUS STONES.

In after days the grateful Emperor of Austria sent him as an Ambassador Extraordinary to the coronation of Queen Victoria, and he appeared in the coronation procession blinding with so many jewels—he was literally covered with them from head to foot—that the London public nick-named him the "Diamond Prince."

The Imperial throne of the Tsars has been declined at least thrice. The first instance occurred when Russia was scarcely known amongst civilised countries. After a great amount of trouble she had freed herself from foreign and domestic enemies. The people ardently longed for a sovereign who would respect their liberties. They tried to induce two respectable old noblemen, Princess Matiaslavski and Pozharaki, to reign, but both shrank from the task.

Then the Russians elected a youth of sixteen, named Michael, whom they crowned on condition that he should swear that he and all his descendants should reign as constitutional sovereigns. Michael was the first Romanoff Tsar—and history tells how far his descendants have been true to the oath he swore.

When the Tsar Alexander I., who had a good share in dragging down Napoleon, died in 1825, he should have been succeeded by his next brother, the Grand Duke Constantine. But Constantine preferred to lead an idle life, to have plenty of money, and to be safe from assassination.

So he refused the crown, which passed to his younger brother, who became Nicholas I. Had not Constantine shirked being an Emperor, the present Tsar would probably never have come anywhere near the Imperial throne.

Spain is another country whose crown has been declined with thanks—or without them—by several men. The most famous of these refusals was that made

by Baldomero Espartero. He was the ninth child of a poor Spanish carter. His father, thinking that little Baldomero was bound to distinguish himself—how could he help doing so with a name like that?—wanted to make him a priest, with the idea that he would then become a village curé, and help his numerous brothers and sisters on in the world.

The worthy old man was heart-broken, and thought his son was ruined for ever, when, at the age of fifteen, the lad ran away from home and enlisted as a private in the Spanish army. But by splendid services Espartero fought his way up to be a Marshal of Spain, Duke of Vitoria and Morella, and Prince of Vergara. And then, in 1868, when a revolution had rendered the throne vacant, the Spanish Cortes would have made Baldomero King of Spain, but he modestly refused.

Another famous man could have been a King, but wouldn't. This was the boy who never told a lie—George Washington. After the conclusion of the War of Independence the United States Congress treated their army—that army which had made the United States a nation—so badly that the soldiers were indignant.

It is an historical fact that they were ready to march into the West, and there to establish a new monarchy, of which their beloved general was to be King.

But George Washington curtly refused to listen to the proposal. He preferred to live and die plain "Mr." Washington, and to be the first President of the United States.

SUFFICIENT REASON.

An Englishman was present at some sports held on the ice of the St. Lawrence.

Though wrapped in furs, he felt the cold keenly, and was astonished to see an ancient Indian wandering about bare-footed and enveloped only in a blanket. He asked the Indian how he managed to stand such a temperature when he had so little on.

"Why you no cover face?" asked the Indian. The gentleman replied that no one ever did, and that he was accustomed to have his face bare from his birth.

"Good," replied the prairie king; "me all face," and walked away.

First Man: "Is your daughter popular?"

Second Man: "Well, I don't want to boast, but fifteen young men are teaching her to skate."

Son: "You said you were going to marry an artist, and now you're engaged to a dentist."

Flo: "Well, isn't he an artist? He draws from real life."

PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATE (explaining away his defeat): "Yes, gentlemen, I have been defeated; but how have I been defeated?"

Voice in the Crowd: "You didn't get enough votes."

A RESTRICTION.

He was young and foolish, and he flattered himself that he was creating a sensation as he circled round the "danger" board on the frozen lake.

Some of the lady skaters became alarmed, and eventually a burly keeper swooped down on the hair-brained one.

None too gently he assisted the young fellow off the ice, and advised him to leave the grounds.

"But, look here," protested the rash youth, "I paid sixpence at the gate."

"That, sir," came the cool retort, "admitted you on to, not into, the lake."

Mrs. Jones: "A man in this paper says that the world will come to an end next Christmas Day."

Mr. Jones: "Oh! After dinner, I hope."

"Now, Bertie, can you tell me the difference between 'like' and 'love'?"

"Yes, miss. I like mother and father—but I love mince-pie."

VERY DOUBTFUL.

The landlord of a certain inn was charged last Christmas with conducting a lottery on his licensed premises. From the evidence of the police it appeared that the defendant had offered a duck to be won by one of his customers.

There was an entrance fee of sixpence, and the matter was decided with dice, the highest thrower being the winner. In the course of his evidence, one of the witnesses was suddenly interrupted by a magistrate—

"And did you win anything?" he asked.

"Well, although I got the duck, I shouldn't like to say," replied the witness. "I've a doubt about it!"

"Nonsense!" ejaculated the magistrate. "If you won the duck, you must remember it!"

"Oh," was the calm reply. "I was awarded the duck right enough, but, as five of the unsuccessful competitors turned up at my house to dinner on the Boxing Day, I'm still doubtful if I won anything!"

SACKED FOR WORKING TOO HARD.

Some Extraordinary Reasons for Dismissal.

In a case tried at Manchester two years ago, it came out that a witness for the prosecution had once been in the employ of the defendant as commercial traveller.

"And why were you dismissed?" snapped the counsel.

"For getting too many orders," was the astonishing reply.

The judge, in amazement, asked the witness to repeat his answer, which he did. The employer was then asked if there was any truth in the statement. He grudgingly admitted that it was true. The traveller, he explained, had obtained more orders than the factory was able to fill, and he had therefore discharged him.

In these days of Trade Unions, excess of zeal is such a rarity that it is small wonder that the judge made severe comments.

It is generally in court that these peculiar cases come to light. Not long ago, Mr. William Alling, a wealthy New Yorker, summoned his coachman because the man refused to accept his dismissal. The judge inquired why the coachman had been discharged. "Because," replied the millionaire, "he is imbued with contempt for the democratic institutions of this country. He has served the nobility in England, and his haughty ways make life unbearable for us. He presumes to dictate to my wife as to when she shall have the privilege of driving out in her own carriage."

A COACHMAN WHO WAS TOO HIGH CLASS.

Naturally, there was much mirth in court at this naive statement, but in this case the coachman thoroughly agreed. "I'm too high-priced for Alling," he remarked. "He's not been used to a high-class coachman."

Another servant who was distinctly too "high-class" for her employer was the newly engaged parlour maid of a merchant of Burgdorf, near Hanover. Upon the day after her arrival, her employer found her affixing a letter box, bearing her own name, to the front door. She haughtily remarked that she did not care for her correspondence to pass through the hands of her mistress, and a private box was a privilege which she had always enjoyed before.

But in this case the worms turned. The young woman was ordered to leave at once.

A cook at Montclair, in New Jersey, was recently discharged because, said her employer, "she can't make corned beef hash." The young woman sued for a month's wages, and to test her capabilities the judge ordered an oil stove, frying pan and other requisites to be brought into court.

There and then the plaintiff prepared a dry hash that the judge, after tasting, declared to be "fit for the Tsar of Russia." A verdict which enriched the ex-cook by twenty dollars (£4) was the result.

Here is a case which parallels the first one mentioned in this article. A young surveyor was engaged by the chief engineer of a certain American Railway Company which was building a line through the Rockies. While at his work, the surveyor made the discovery that a tunnel through a certain rock mass would be easily cut, and would save the company a long, steep, and expensive detour, one moreover much exposed to avalanches.

WANTED THINGS HIS OWN WAY.

Now, the chief engineer was a martinet, and he had planned that line himself. Still, the surveyor thought he ought to mention his discovery. His reward was a stony stare of contempt and a month's notice.

The surveyor got work in the neighbourhood, and waited his chance. A few months later, the general manager came to see how things were getting on, and him the young man approached. This time he not only got a hearing, but was ordered to show his plans. The manager then went to inspect the place. Finally, he said, "This tunnel is going to save the company the best part of two hundred thousand. If you like to take on your old job again at twice the salary, you can do it." That young surveyor is now chief engineer to the company.

When you enter a large shop, especially of the millinery or department order, you should never leave a counter without buying something, if only of the value of a penny. In too many of such establishments assistants are fined for every customer whom they fail to make a sale to, and a certain number of such fines within a week spells dismissal. Mention of this kind of thing brings to mind an absurd case which happened in Berlin.

A young man from the country was engaged as assistant in a draper's shop. Enter a lady who asked for hats. She tried on several down, and then, after leaving the shelves and counters in a wreck, avowed that she was only looking, not purchasing.

"Then, madam," said the young man firmly, "we must charge you 50 pfennigs (sixpence) for the trouble you have given."

The lady made a dreadful outcry, and the poor, young assistant got discharged. It would seem that he was worthy of a better fate!



Bread was once 1s. 9½d. a Quarter Loaf.

THE cost of living has risen sharply during the past year, and the strain on the housewife's purse is heavier this Christmas than for a good many years past.

Almost all the common articles of food have risen in price since last January, with the two exceptions of tea and sugar. The past summer has been a dry one, not only in this country, but in France, Australia, and Canada. Consequently, pasturage has been less abundant than usual, and there is a scarcity of butter. Canadian and Australasian have both gone up about 7s. a cwt. wholesale, or a penny a pound retail, and cheese is also on an average a penny a pound dearer than usual.

Bacon has gone up in price universally, partly because farmers are not keeping so many pigs as they used to, and partly because the lessened demand for tinned meat has increased the consumption of bacon and ham.

Most jams have risen in price, so has marmalade, and also foods so widely different as tapioca and sardines.

YOUR PUDDING WILL BE DEARER.

Worse than this, almost all those delicacies specially appropriate to the Christmas season are up. Best raisins and currants are actually 30 per cent. more costly than last year. Dealers in dried fruits and nuts assert that the crops are short and prices thereby enhanced, so there is not the slightest doubt that the plum-pudding of 1906 will be more expensive than that of 1905 and previous years.

Besides the increased cost of foods, there is a scarcity in two of the principal commodities of everyday use, namely, wool and leather. The former famine means that socks, shirts, blankets, carpets, curtains, tweeds and underclothing are all more expensive than this time last year; and the latter implies a rise in boots and shoes, gaiters, saddlery, portmanteaux, gloves, and scores of similar articles. The importance of the rise in leather may be judged from the fact that guinea boots have gone up to 23s. 6d., and half-crown gloves to 3s.

SEVENPENCE A POUND FOR SUGAR.

We should have to go a long way back to match the prices of the present year, or to find so costly a Christmas as the present. In fact, very nearly half a century, for the winter 1857-8 was the last year in which the general average of every-day commodities ruled as high as it does to-day.

In that year butter and bacon were both as high or higher than at present; raw hides went to 96 shillings a cwt., as against an average of 75 shillings; beef rose to elevenpence a pound; bread was at sevenpence a loaf, and wool was 20 per cent. above its usual price; sugar actually went to sevenpence a pound. 1864, the year in which the great struggle between the Northern and Southern States of America came to an end, was a very bad time for the British public. The cotton famine was at its worst; Lancashire was starving, the results were felt all over the country. In that year cotton print cost wholesale £2 8s. 4d. per 100 yards, against an average price of 18s. Linen and flannel were almost equally above their usual prices; cheese was 7s. a cwt. above its average. Leather went to the almost unprecedented price of £9 10s. per cwt.

THE WORST PERIOD OF ALL.

The various Christmas delicacies seldom rise in price all at once. Oranges, for instance, were dearest in 1862, when they sold at twopence apiece instead of twenty a shilling. Raisins were dearest in 1856, at which Christmas they were 10d. a pound. Beef was at its dearest in 1883; brandy, in 1857; spices, in 1887; cigars, in 1882.

But costly as various commodities have been at various times, and expensive as our present Christmas is proving, present-day housekeepers should be truly thankful that they did not live a century ago, when the Napoleonic wars were raging and the danger to trade was so great that imports from the Continent almost ceased. As much as £30,000 was asked and paid for the carriage of a cargo of 400 tons from Calais to London, and the almost incredible sum of £20,000 was demanded for running a cargo from Bordeaux to our capital.

Trade was in a desperate state, factories closed, enormous numbers of people were receiving poor relief, everything was taxed that could be taxed, and plum pudding was a luxury which only the richest could afford.

In 1801 butter was at 1s. 4d., loaf sugar at 1s. 5d., currants and raisins were three to four times their

present prices, spices cost nine to ten times as much as at present. French plums were 10d. a pound; brandy was half as dear again as at present. Materials for a pudding which at present can be bought for 4s. 6d. cost in that year 17s.

The commonest necessities of life rose in proportion. On January 1st, 1801, a quarter loaf sold in London at 1s. 9½d., and that in spite of the fact that we grew much more wheat in proportion to our population than we do now. Candles were 11d. a pound; drinkable tea cost half a guinea a pound; coffee was 6s. 6d.

Even meat, which in the eighteenth century was a good deal cheaper than it is now, was equally costly. Beef was 1s. a pound, mutton 1s. 1d., veal another penny dearer. For choice cuts eighteen and twenty pence were required.

At Christmas 1801 hay was £7 8s. a ton in White-chapel, and coal 51s., while a suit of ordinary woollen clothes could not be had for less than £7 10s. Let us be thankful that our lot is cast in cheaper times.

EDWARD: "Why do you think I have loved before?"

EDITH: "Because you always feel carefully for pins before putting your arms around my waist."

"THOUSANDS of poor people practically freeze to death every year," remarked a persevering philanthropist, earnestly.

"Dreadful!" exclaimed his rich but miserly friend. "Why don't they go to the Riviera for the winter?"

"Ah, my little man," said the benevolent-looking old gentleman, "I saw you giving a great big, rosy-cheeked apple to that little boy just now, and I see by your happy laughing face that the good deed has given you pleasure."

"You bet it has," said the little man with a grin. "That's Tommy Jones I gave the apple to, and I scooped the inside out, and filled it with mustard."

SONG OF THE WALLFLOWER

This polka's a romp, I prefer to sit still
As the fellows seem terribly lacking in skill;
Keeping time to the music in sweet reverie
I imagine I'm dancing with Cupid, M.C.

Contentedly watching the whirls of the dance
I scorn, though I notice, each pitying glance;
Pray spare your compassion, your weak sympathy—
I am having the Lancers with Cupid, M.C.

Now another tune starts, but what have I done
That each gallant my favours should carefully shun,
Neglected again, not a partner for me—
This waltz is delightful with Cupid, M.C.

Time passes, the music with sweet rhythm flows
No partners come forward—to tread on my toes—
But the Prince of my visions in fancy I see,
I will dance all the evening with Cupid, M.C.

"LIKE most men," he said, "I have my shortcomings, I suppose, but—"
"Oh, it isn't your shortcomings father objects to," interrupted the girl. "It's your long stayings."

"I SAY, what's the matter with this coffee?" remarked the lodger whose bill was in arrears.
"Same thing that's the matter with you, I suppose," answered the landlady; "it's slow about settling."

"WILL you think of me when I'm gone?" asked the lovelorn youth, who seemed unable to tear himself from her presence.

"Oh, yes," answered the fair one, as she strangled a yawn. "That is, if you ever give me the opportunity."

THOROUGHLY PREPARED.

AMONG the guests at a certain country house one Christmas was a young gentleman who claimed to be able to "read character at a glance."

"Now, there's your new butler," he remarked to his host. "I've seen little of the man, but I would undertake, by merely playing the family ghost, to frighten him into a fit."

"I don't think you would," laughed the host. "Anyhow, you have my consent to try."

The young fellow declared his intention to do so; but, as he didn't wish to overdo the thing, he determined to drop a word of warning to the butler.

"I say, Briggs," he whispered to that individual on meeting him in the corridor, "you haven't seen the family ghost, have you? I'm told that he invariably walks on Christmas Eve, y'know."

"Thank you for the hint, sir," calmly replied the butler. "One hint should be worth another, sir, and"—here he dived his hand into a back pocket, and produced a wicked-looking revolver—"here's one for the ghost if you should see him first, sir."

The young gentleman decided that, after all, he wouldn't carry the joke any further.

FREAK YULETIDES FOR RICH FOLK.

One Smart-set House-party Did All Their Own Christmas Cooking.

A CERTAIN English millionaire never saw a regular old-fashioned Christmas of ice and snow during the last forty years of his life. Each 25th of December was spent by himself, his family, and his guests in an atmosphere of tropical heat, with beautiful flowers all round them, and with a cloudless sky of delicate blue overhead. And his Christmas dinner, instead of relying on the orthodox turkey, goose, and plum-pudding, consisted of such viands as spring lamb and mid-summer fruits.

Yet the millionaire did not fly to Italy or the tropics for his Christmases, but spent them all in England. He was, or professed to be, tired of the old-fashioned Christmas Day, and wanted to have something different.

So a subterranean chamber built under a lake in his private grounds was transformed into a summer-like paradise, with a ceiling painted to resemble the sky, and deftly arranged lights to conjure up a vision of sunshine. Unlimited money did the rest.

HOLLY AND MISTLETOE TOO OUT-OF-DATE.

There are a good many people who, while not actually trying to abolish Christmas altogether, yet do all they can to make it as different from what Nature intended it to be as possible.

They are wealthy people mostly, who are so jaded with what their money has brought for them that ordinary pleasures do not appeal to them. They vote the old-fashioned Christmas of holly, mistletoe, and the Christmas trees as much too out of date for them. A great number of schemes have been tried already. Some have been found wanting. Others have been overdone.

Two or three years ago a large number of guests were invited to spend Christmas at a country mansion belonging to a very "smart" family. To their astonishment they found no carriages awaiting them at the station, and had to tramp through the snow with their own luggage. Arrived at the mansion, they discovered that all the servants had been sent off for a holiday, and that the members of the family and themselves—the guests—were to do all the cooking and all the domestic work.

THE LORD WHO COULDN'T COOK.

It was a novel and exciting Christmas for all concerned. Christmas fare was abolished by common consent, and the Christmas dinner consisted principally of pork chops and toasts, with lemonade—or should have done so.

But a venerable-looking member of the House of Lords who was unanimously selected as *chef* turned out a very qualified success, and as a result of endeavouring to cook the chops on a gridiron dropped too many of them into the fire. Still, famine was stayed off somehow.

The rest of the domestic duties were carried out by young ladies and gentlemen who scarcely knew the difference between a flat-iron and a dust-pan, and superintended by a countess who was under the impression that a coal-brush was just the thing to sweep out a drawing-room. It was a jolly Christmas all round, but what the genuine servants had to say on their return is not recorded.

SPENDING CHRISTMAS IN THE HAUNTS OF CRIME.

Christmases in slumland used to be rather popular among the ultra-fashionable. Instead of spending the happy day in the midst of all that their money could have bought for them, numbers of people to whom wealth and luxury had become wearisome, elected to go down to the level of the poorest of the poor at Christmas time. Suitably disguised in shabby and even dilapidated garments, they went into the haunts of poverty and misery—and sometimes into those of crime as well. A nobleman fond of dabbling in social problems was in the habit of organising such Christmas parties, consisting of himself and as many of his friends as were willing to go with him or whom he thought it safe to take.

Then, under the guidance of private detectives or policemen, the party of rich folk would pass Christmas Day in the lowest of social depths—in what was to them practically a new and strange and probably a terrifying world.

It must be confessed that the motives of such people have been, in the main, no better than a craving for novelty and excitement. But sometimes the discoveries and experiences which have come their way have led to good, by inducing them to help their unfortunate fellow-creatures.

Other rich men, anxious to escape from orthodoxy, have contrived to spend "freak" Christmases in the workhouse in the guise of sham paupers—just to see what it was like. One wealthy man at least, posing as an out-of-work derelict, managed to get himself sent to prison for smashing a window on Christmas Eve.

He wanted a new experience—and he got it.

You have three Horse Shoe Magnets.



There is a Good Deal of Magnetism in Your Body.

"MIND you, I don't say that I could, but I believe I could." These words were said by Smythe, the magnetic cobbler of Bow, when asked if he could bring back the spirit to a body given up for dead. He then laid his hand on the head of the interviewer and sent a tingle all down his spine; taking his hands in his own, Smythe's muscular arms quivered as he sent waves of magnetism down them into the body of the interviewer.

Those who come into contact with a man having this power are apt to think it is something weird, or to exclaim, "Marvellous! Wonderful!" yet the man is only using, perhaps unconsciously, one of his horse-shoe magnets, and every one of us, if perfect, possesses three of these.

Mr. H. Durville, of Paris, made some interesting experiments which led him to fix the exact polarity of the human body.

He discovered that the body represents three horse-shoe magnets, two of them having the neutral point at the summit of the head, and the third in an inverted position to that of the two first ones. The most important divides us laterally from right to left, the other from the fore part to the back part of the body.

The neutral point of what we will term the first horse-shoe magnet is at the summit of the head and its extremities are represented by the hands, the right hand being the positive pole and the left hand the negative pole.

The second magnet is a longer one than the first, having as its neutral point the summit of the head, and for its two branches the feet, the right foot being positive and the left foot negative.

The magnet in the inverted position makes the third, its neutral point is the perineum (as shown in fig. 3), and the extremities of its branches are the forehead and the occiput (a bone at the back of the head), the forehead being positive and the occiput negative.

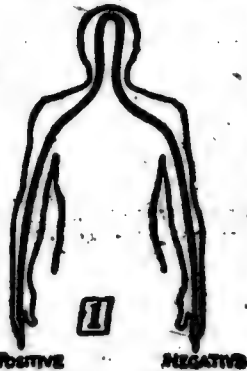
From this it will be seen that the right side of your body is the positive side, and the left the negative side, and that the fore part of your body is positive while the back part is negative.

A sensitive subject drinking water which has been charged with human magnetism can tell by the taste whether it was charged with the right or the left hand; the water charged with the positive hand will be fresh and acidulated, while that charged with the negative hand is nauseous and alkaline.

Baron von Reichenbach, who carried out numerous experiments with sensitive persons, found that if placed in a dark room facing a magnet, they could see a dark-blue light emanating from the positive pole, and a yellow-red light flowing from the negative pole; while placing their hands near the positive pole they could feel a fresh cool sensation, but from the negative it was a tepid or warm feeling. Reichenbach then experimented by placing his sensitives before a human body in a dark room, and the colours and sensations were identical with those obtained by means of the magnet.

It is well known that with magnets the poles of the same name acting upon one another are repelled and the poles of the contrary names are attracted. This truth is one which should not be lost sight of in the treatment of disease by human magnetism.

In using magnetism on the left side or back of a person, the right hand of the operator will calm and give a sense of ease, while the left hand used on these parts will excite and give a feeling of uneasiness.



POSITIVE NEGATIVE



POSITIVE NEGATIVE



POSITIVE NEGATIVE

In the same way, the left hand will give similar effects if used on the right and front of the body or on the left and back part.

If you have a friend whose nervous system requires bracing up, place the left hand on the epigastrium, the upper part of the stomach, or the breast bone, and the right hand on the opposite part at the back, the vertebral column. Let them remain in that position until you feel a tingling sensation in the hands which will not be long if you are at all magnetic, when this is felt you will have sent a current of magnetism through the nervous system of your subject.

If you desire to relieve pain in the left side or back of a person, lay the right hand on the diseased part; if the pain is in the right side or forepart of the body it must be treated with the left hand. If you use the wrong hand you will increase the pain. Headaches, neuralgia, earache, and toothache may be easily cured or alleviated by this method.

It is not necessary to remove clothing in giving treatment unless the subject is wearing any apparel of silk, then it will be better to have this removed.

Many experiments may be tried, for where there are a number of people gathered together there will be one or more who are rather sensitive to this human magnetism.

Charge two glasses of water, one with the positive hand and the other with the negative. To do this you need not touch the water with the hands; if charging with the positive or right hand, take the glass and hold it in the left hand while you point the fingers of the right hand at the water, not allowing them to touch this. Fix your mind on the work, and mentally picture a stream of magnetism flowing from your fingers into the water—three or four minutes will suffice. This should be done in private, and you may then pass the glass or some of the water to the persons present, who should not be told what to expect, but just asked to describe any particular flavour they taste.

Another experiment is to sit in a darkened room and mentally send the magnetism down your arms and off at the fingers, asking the company to watch closely and tell you if they observe anything.

'T WAS POSSIBLE.

LITTLE Toddie's shining nose only just reached the grocer's counter. He laid his Christmas penny on the counter deliberately.

"Two sixpits 'a'ports o' dates, please," he said. "Why don't you have a pennyworth?" asked Mr. Sandyman, the grocer.

"Oos one 'a'port is for bruvver Dickie," replied Toddie.

"But you could have had a pennyworth and divided them."

"Yes," said the boy, "I know I could. But, you see, there might be a hodd 'un."

NOTICE.

Next week's PEARSON'S WEEKLY will be published on THURSDAY instead of Friday.

RUSTIC: "What's the matter?"
MOTORIST: "Matter! I can't get this car to go."
RUSTIC: "Then it's the lucky man you are, for only yesterday a motorist got nearly smashed to bits here because he couldn't get his car to stop."

SOON REMEDIED.

MARLEY was miserable. No man appreciated Christmas-time more than he did; he had always been the life and soul of the merry-making. Yet here he was, alone, damp, and miserable, eating his Christmas dinner in the coffee-room of a woe-begone inn.

Marley's motto has always been "Business before pleasure"; but he wished he had shirked the business which had summoned him to this dreary country at Christmas-time. He dined for a while over a magazine, and then, in sheer desperation, he betook himself to bed.

Shortly after dosing off he was awakened by the pattering of rain, and, to his disgust, he found water was dripping on to his bed through the ceiling.

He pulled the bell savagely, and, after a lapse of time, someone condescended to answer it.

"You must find me another room, please," said Marley. "The rain's leaking in like fury."

"Oh, is that all you were bothering about?" snarled the landlady's voice. "If you'd thought to look, you'd have found an umbrella under the bed. Use it, man!"

WILLIE (whose father is building a conservatory): "Papa, if I planted this pip, would an orange tree grow up from it?"

PAPA: "Of course, my son, and oranges would grow on it."

WILLIE: "That's very wonderful, isn't it, papa? because this is a lemon pip!"

DON'T REST YOUR LADDER on the CLOUDS

Wait Till You Have Something Solid to Rest It Against.

Is a young fellow were to go out into the street with a very long ladder, and rest the end of this, not against the front of a substantial house, or a telegraph pole, but against a fleecy cloud sailing in the sky, and then begin to climb up—what would happen to him?

Wouldn't he come tumbling to the ground with a rush, and wouldn't all the people who were looking on laugh at his folly in trusting his ladder to such a support?

Yet this is just what a lot of so-called sensible, level-headed young fellows are doing every day.

It's good to be ambitious and to try to mount higher. But it is very foolish to try to climb up on a ladder that is resting on the clouds.

Tom Robinson and Algernon Bloom used to sit beside each other on stools in the same office. They both wanted to be more than mere clerks. Tom wanted to be a journalist. Algernon had visions of his masterpieces being hung in the Royal Academy.

Tom knew that he couldn't expect to write leaders for the Times, or even earn bread and butter right off at a profession of which he hadn't had any experience. So he continued to drudge at the office, and spent his evenings and spare time in improving himself in every way he could and in writing things—articles, stories, poems—on "spec."

ALGERNON'S DOWNFALL.

It was very hard work; but Tom had his reward. After several years he felt that he had erected something against which he could rest his ladder and be sure that it would not come tumbling down. So he gave up his clerkship and began to climb.

But Algernon was very scornful of such a slow course of procedure. He threw up the regular berth at the outset, and went in headlong for art. He had no experience, and his talent needed maturing and strengthening before it could be any good. So Algernon could not make money.

He starved, and sank lower and lower. He took to cadging from his friends to buy a dinner and pay for his lodgings. He made himself a nuisance—and he sank in his own self-respect, and finally lost all his hope and belief.

Then it was all over. His ladder had been erected against the clouds, and had given way beneath him.

Of course, everybody who takes risks does not come to grief. But those who can do everything they want without preparing themselves for it and learning and waiting—well, they are so few that it isn't worth while discussing them here. The average fellow is not like that.

SHAKESPEARE STARTED SLOWLY.

Besides, even geniuses can't climb up ladders which rest on the clouds alone. There never was a greater genius in this world than the man who wrote "Hamlet." You can take it for granted that when young Shakespeare came to London he had made up his mind to climb up very high indeed.

But he had sense, had the immortal bard. He knew he was sure to fall if he trusted to the clouds. So he did not start out by writing tragedies. He realised that he was not strong enough to do it, and that nobody was ready to buy his productions. He needed experience of men and life. So he was ready to start humbly.

He began by holding the horses of the fine gentlemen outside the theatre, when the fine ones were watching the play inside.

Then he became a sort of utility young man in the theatre—sweeping up and acting small parts. After this he got on. He wrote "King Lear," and about thirty-six other plays which will never die, and made his fortune.

Shakespeare didn't believe in resting his ladder against the clouds.

THE PATIENCE OF FAMOUS MEN.

Neither did Charles Dickens nor Walter Scott. The author of "Pickwick" slaved as a reporter till he was sure that his literary ladder had something to rest on that he could trust to.

Scott was a hard-working lawyer for years, and refused to give up his slow-going but safe profession till he was sure that he could get a new situation as a popular writer.

That is a commonplace way of putting it, but it is a practical way. Fewer young men would come to disaster if they would only be a bit more sure of what they are trusting to before they start out to do something.

Hogarth wanted to be a painter, but he had a good situation as an engraver in a goldsmith's shop, and he worked and waited till he was really a good hand at the profession he wished to take up before he trusted to it.

It's the same in every-day life. If you want to rise, don't be scornful of the humble berth you occupy at present. Don't throw it up before you can see your way to something better. It might be your very best friend, if you treat it properly.

It will teach you things, help you to be independent, and give you a chance to live while you are trying your wings and preparing for that big climb you are going to make some day.

GAVE THE GAME AWAY.

GERTIE (who had just been kissed by Arthur under the mistletoe, which he had discovered hanging in the hall): "Oh, Arthur, you wicked wretch to take advantage of me like that! I wish I knew who hung it there; I'd—I'd pay them out, that's all!"

Arthur (to little brother, later on in the evening): "Tommy, I am going to take Gertie away from you soon. Will you mind?"

Tommy: "Not in the least, Mr. Popp. Sis and I are not friends now."

Arthur: "How's that?"

Tommy (heedless of Gertie's killing glances): "Oh, she boxed my ears for tipping her off the chair when she was nailing up that mistletoe in the hall!"

Mr. NERVEY: "Delighted to hear you're going to be married soon."

Miss Pechis: "The idea! That's news to me."

Mr. Nervev: "You misunderstand me. I mean I'll be delighted to hear it after I propose to you to-night."

"CHRISTMAS BOX," said an extremely ragged little urchin, entering a pastry-cook's.

"What claims have you upon me?" asked the proprietor. "I never saw you before."

"Why, please, sir, I looks in at the window to see what time it is when I go by."

PHILANTHROPY.

An amusing instance of the danger of dropping a friendly hint came to light at a certain police-court last Christmas time.

Mr. A. is a gentleman who is sometimes a philanthropist if he can do it without touching his own pocket.

He charged a seedy-looking individual with entering his garden and helping himself to the choicest sprigs of holly.

"What have you to say?" asked the chairman.

"Why," gasped the prisoner, "that man"—the prosecutor—"told me himself just twelve months ago that the house was empty and that I might as well take the holly and sell it as allow it to waste in the garden."

This statement staggered the prosecutor, who had forgotten the incident. Still, he was bound to admit that it was perfectly true.

"All the same," he added lugubriously; "last Christmas I'd no idea of buying that house myself."

Mrs. NEWRICH (who has advertised for a Christmas pianist): "So you are the music teacher that answered my advertisement?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Well, sit down there and play a couple of duets, so that I can see what you can do."

"This half-crown—" began the cashier of the restaurant, as he scrutinised the coin.

"Is bad, eh?" interrupted the sour-looking patron.

"Well, it doesn't look very good."

"Well, just bite it, and if it's anything like the dinner I had it'll taste even worse than it looks."

THE UNKNOWN HELPER.

Grateful to host and hostess too,
On both your heartfelt thanks bestow,
But don't forget, whatever you do,
The girl who hung the mistletoe.

Acclaim the half successful trick,
The good old game be shown, or show;
But let your heart to thank be quick—
The girl who hung the mistletoe.

No more the entertaining guest
Your gratitude should feel and know,
Than the unknown, the unconfessed—
The girl who hung the mistletoe.

Applaud the useful vocalist,
The raconteur's delightful flow,
But treasure, when you've cooed and kissed,
The girl who hung the mistletoe.

"THERE are five shillings," said the old gentleman to his young grandson—"one for each of your birthdays. What more could a little fellow like you wish?"

"Only that I was as old as you, grandpa," replied the young financier.

SHOPWALKER: "What are we to do with Heavy-head? He is always falling asleep."

Proprietor: "Oh, send him to the nightshirt department, and tell the customers that our night-shirts are so excellent that the very look of them sends the salesmen to sleep."

THEIR TRUE OPINION.

THE part of "Father Christmas" may be easily overacted, as a certain town councillor would be the first to admit. He had been asked to take part in the annual treat to the old folk at the local workhouse. Made up as the ancient gentleman beloved of the children, he went, and for a time his pranks and antics delighted the company.

Then a scrap of conversation he chanced to overhear scarcely added to the worthy councillor's enjoyment.

"Ain't 'e enjoyin' of hisself," remarked one aged inmate to another. "Wot a treat it is fer the likes o' he. But why can't they let all the loonies out on a night like this?"

"Well," came the distinct reply, "mebbe they ain't all so harmless as this'n."

"Stop playing that trombone, sir. The man next door says he can't read."

"Never heard of such ignorance. Tell him I could read when I was five years old."

"I WOULD have you to know, sir," said the short-statured man, "that I have been well brought up."

"Possibly," replied the taller one; "but you weren't brought up far, were you?"

A GENTLE REMINDER.

MR. JOHNSON had brought home a yule-log, and in a weak moment he told his better half what he had paid for it. For some days after that the intensely practical Mrs. J. had a good deal to say about yule-logs, fools and their money, wicked waste, and so on.

Johnson tried hard to forget the little incident, and had almost succeeded by the time the guests gathered round the cheerful fireside.

He was at peace with all the world, was Johnson, and in a lull of the conversation he stretched his legs a little nearer the fender and observed:

"I-like these grand old Christmas customs, Maria. It is only at a time like this, gathered round the blazing yule-log, that one appreciates his ancestors, so to speak. They knew a thing or two in the good old times, after all. They knew the value of comfort, as exemplified by the cheerful crackle of the Christmas log. They knew—er—"

"Better than to pay a shilling for a penn'orth of wood," suggested Mrs. J.

Then Johnson changed the subject.

TO MAKE YOUR LIVER AND KIDNEYS ACT—GRATIS!

URIC ACID BRINGS ILL-HEALTH.

Investigation strengthens the belief that eating too much meat is responsible for the formation of uric acid, which produces disease in our midst with terrible results.

It is quite true that a large percentage of the population suffer from uric acid troubles. But eating meat is a necessity of life, and one of its greatest pleasures.

The round of roast beef with the rich red gravy is a palate tickler we should not like to discard. If we are to give up eating meat, and many other pleasures of life, we might as well die.

There is no need to die (at least, not at present), and there is no reason why any of the reasonable enjoyments of life should be abandoned if we regulate the internal organs to counteract the mischief of errors in diet.

Kutnow's Powder taken occasionally before breakfast, on an empty stomach, will clear the system of all excessive uric acid. It has a most delightfully refreshing and invigorating effect.

It clears and cleanses the foul stomach and quickly gets rid of indigestion. It rouses the sluggish liver, and most effectually removes biliousness and jaundice.

It flushes the kidneys, dilutes the urine, and washes out the bladder.

The best health-giver in the world is Kutnow's Powder, which will be sent free of cost, once only, to any applicant. If you fill in the accompanying Application Form, cut it out, and send it to our London Offices, you will never regret it.



HEALTH COUPON

TO OBTAIN KUTNOW'S POWDER FREE OF CHARGE
SIGN THIS FORM
(Write distinctly).

Name.....

Address.....

P.W., 20/12/06.

Cut out and send this form to S. Kutnow & Co. Ltd.,
41 Farringdon Road, London, E.C.

KUTNOW'S BRINGS GOOD HEALTH

Is it your wish to eat well, digest well, sleep well, and work well? Would you like to feel strong, active, and full of energy in business? Do you wish to have your blood purified, and to be free from all uric acid contamination?

Wisdom answers, YES!!! We are glad to hear it.

Send in the Health Coupon at once, and we will forward the remedy by return free of charge and post-paid.

One free trial will convince the most sceptical person on earth. The trial costs you nothing, so try it at once.

URIC ACID ELIMINATED.

"Stirton," Victoria Road North, Southsea.

"Dear Sirs,—It gives me much pleasure in testifying to the efficacy of Kutnow's Powder. It is most refreshing, clears the system of uric acid, and acts on the liver and kidneys. I have recently been very ill from rheumatic fever, and since I have taken it I feel a great deal better, and I firmly believe it is a grand blood purifier.

"July 20th.

"A. GRAHAME-HARVEY."

HOW TO GUARD AGAINST FRAUD.

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has noticed this. To soar is a comparatively easy matter; but to keep it up and steadily maintain one's equilibrium against cross currents and sudden squalls—"aye, there's the rub." As a journalist

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TOYS OF FATE.

A Human Drama Written by STACEY BLAKE.

THE FIRST CHAPTERS.

JIM ELLICOTT decides to kill himself. His fiancée, Muriel Danebridge, has returned his ring; and the firm in which all his money is invested has become insolvent.

With this idea in view, he commences clearing up his affairs. There is the five hundred pounds he owes Israel Zorzi, the moneylender. He contracted the debt by being bound for a friend. It would never be paid now.

Then Ellicott remembers he has lent his revolver to his old friend Vincent Hartley. So he buys a new one.

He writes to Muriel telling her of his intention. Just as he is finishing his arrangements Vincent Hartley calls. With white face and bloodless lips, he confesses that he has killed Israel Zorzi.

The moneylender, it appeared, after dunning him at his club, had waylaid him on Hampstead Heath. Words had come to blows. Zorzi brought out a knife, whereupon Hartley drew forth Ellicott's revolver and shot him. Then he flung the weapon away and fled.

When Hartley hears that Ellicott intends to kill himself, he implores him to take the blame of Zorzi's murder upon his shoulders.

Ellicott agrees to do it, and he writes Hartley a letter in which he takes upon himself the crime. It is written on his own peculiar green notepaper. Exulting at his new lease of life, Hartley runs out to post it.

Meanwhile, Muriel, who in sending back the ring has been influenced by her aunt, hears of Jim's terrible misfortune. She now realises that he alone fills her heart.

So she writes to him and pleads for the return of her ring. Will he meet her at Lady Brooksbank's reception that night? Needless to say, on receipt of this letter, Jim does not commit suicide.

Instead, he goes to the reception. When he meets Muriel he forgets the existence of everyone else, and together they go to a secluded nook, where he hears what he has already read, from Muriel's own lips.

Then falls the bolt from the blue. Vincent Hartley appears and is thunderstruck at seeing Ellicott still alive.

Jim leaves Muriel for a moment and explains to his friend that, owing to circumstances altering, he cannot keep his agreement. But this doesn't do for Hartley; he refuses point blank to release Jim from his promise, and says he intends to keep the incriminating letter.

As Jim attempts to enter his flat that night Vincent Hartley stuns him with a sand-bag. Thinking he has killed him he makes it appear as though Jim had committed suicide.

But Jim recovers, and by a strategy he obtains the green envelope. When he gets home he anxiously opens it. Instead of finding inside the letter that means so much to him he only discovers a blank piece of paper, and in his agony he collapses to the ground. For Hartley, being afraid to trust the letter to the post, had inserted a piece of paper in its stead.

Next morning Hartley expects the green envelope, but is disappointed. All the same, he rings up Scotland Yard on the telephone and tells them that Ellicott has written him a strange confession. A detective named Nall visits him, and together they go to Jim's abode. Nall forces open the door, and they find Jim huddled on the floor.

Jim is charged with murder, and in his rage rushes at Hartley. During the struggle Nall handcuffs him.

Later, when Muriel and her aunt are out lunching, Lady Blanthorpe sees a paper, and she tells her niece that Ellicott has been arrested for the murder of Israel Zorzi. A foreign customer in the restaurant hears the remark. He rushes round to Ellicott's abode and there meets Nall and Hartley. The detective learns his story. He is Juan Asperillo, a Spaniard, the lover of Zorzi's daughter, Shebah, whom someone has basely deceived.

The moneylender had gone to Hampstead Heath that fatal night intent on killing his daughter's betrayer. But he had been killed himself. And Ellicott had confessed the crime. According to the Spaniard's reasoning, therefore, Ellicott was the scoundrel who had ruined Shebah. Asperillo declares that, but for the fact that the law has Jim in its power, he would take a heavy vengeance.

The detective visits Muriel, and she declares that she had received no letter from Jim. Some burnt paper lies in the grate, and Nall guesses the truth.

Muriel hears that a woman is the cause of the murder, so, with her aunt, she visits Hartley at his office. Whilst they are speaking Asperillo enters and tells his story. And Muriel goes away believing Jim to be guilty.

That is what the judge and jury think too, when Jim is tried. Twenty years' penal servitude is his punishment; much rather would he have faced death.

Vincent Hartley buys from a moneylender two debts that Lady Blanthorpe has contracted.

By obtaining these he has Muriel's aunt in his power, and he forces her to persuade Muriel to marry him.

On the step of his club he meets Asperillo, and he hears that Zorzi has willed that his money shall be divided between the Spaniard and Shebah. He inquires what Asperillo intends to do now that he is a rich man, and the artist discloses that he is going to Spain, to search for Zorzi's betrayed daughter—the woman who knows!

YOU CAN NOW READ ON.

CHAPTER NINETEEN.

A Soul Looking Out of a Grave.

THERE are no roads to Casalarreina. One can reach it by a two-days' journey from Tarifa upon a track, which the occasional passage of pack-mules keeps from final obliteration.

The other way is by sea, from that same walled city which the Moors built a thousand years ago, and which is still little changed. Because the curse of money-making, which turns the world upside down, sits lightly on Spain. The Moors built Casalarreina, too, the wall that hems it about (though this is ruinous in places), and the stone quay that is crumbling away with the water-lapping of ten centuries. And no one has built anything since. What would you?

The sunshine is outside. The mosque, whence the Muezzin was sounded long centuries ago, serves for Christian worship. The little harbour is silted up, but then ships never have, never would, come. Ships are always on the blue line of the sea, going and coming without ceasing, no one in Casalarreina knew where or whence, or cared, but none ever stayed. The place was dead—as dead as those who built it. Even the map-makers had forgotten it.

But Juan Asperillo found it, though it was more than the task of a day. He landed from a felucca one chill morning when the patrons of the wine shop by the water-gate shivered continually over a suffocating and inadequate charcoal brazier.

Never had such a winter been known in the province before. Word had been brought by those who went up into the hills, who had had speech with those who journeyed into the sierras, that snow lay thick upon the mountain tops. Even the sun, which always shone brightly in Casalarreina, had no warmth in it now that the north wind blew.

Mildly surprised eyes lifted to Asperillo. What did a caballero want in Casalarreina?

A stout, small man, dressed in what once had been black, stood propped up against a block of stone on the quay, smoking a cigarette with an air of being thankful for the comforts a good God had given him—and taking thought for the future by contemplatively rolling another between forefinger and thumb. The black garment that had changed to a dusky green was a cassock. This man was a priest.

"Lodgings, señor?" he said, making answer with a gravity that seemed to be perpetually struggling with a humorous twinkle in the corners of his eyes. "I do not think there is a bed to spare in Casalarreina."

The artist looked around with a grim look on his face. Perhaps he had imbibed some of the hardness of the brisk northern island air. "Then I will sleep under the wall there," he answered.

The priest nodded gravely, as though wondering what reason anyone should have to stay in Casalarreina, any reason that mattered, and then he laughed and set his double chin rolling.

"I am about to take wine," he said, opening his hands deprecatingly. "If you, señor—"

Asperillo followed. They entered the narrow street under an arched gateway shaped like a horseshoe. At the other side was a little blank where a house had fallen in ruin—and never rebuilt because there was no one to live in it—and a big palm tree occupied the space of it with a tangle of red geraniums about it. The artist paused with an involuntary exclamation of admiration on his lips.

"Yes, the good God has spared nothing in this country," said the priest, with his eyes on the feast of colour, "except"—and here his voice changed and grew hard, as though a new thought had come to him—"except a conscience for its people," and as he spoke, with an angry vibration in his voice, he lifted his eyes up to the brown square building on the hill, which could be seen where they stood.

"What is that building?"

"A convent, my friend," returned the priest.

Asperillo remembered this a little time after. At the moment he was not concerned with the sins of Casalarreina. He was absorbed with the object that had brought him thither.

The priest stopped before a grim, dark house with nailed door and barred windows, and the good humour had returned to his eyes when he pointed the way inside.

"But it is quite pleasant upstairs—in my room," he said.

"Ha! and my name is Veja—the Padre Veja!"

"My name is Asperillo," said the other, bowing gravely, for they have time to be polite in Spain. "I am of Toledo."

"He! and that is but two days from Madrid." He spoke of mule travel. There are many in Spain who have never seen a railway.

"You will have been to Madrid then? And I never. It has been my ambition. But one must be thankful. I have my moments," and he threw open the door of a room, which Asperillo saw was filled with books. He indicated these with a shake of his open hand.

"A wise man asks for much, but is content when he receives half—or nothing. Such a wise man is happy. What would you? To be, to do, to have, after all, what does it matter?"

"Everything, my father," said Asperillo, with a little fierce snap in his voice.

Father Veja looked curiously at his visitor a moment, and then sighed as one who is familiar with sorrow.

"Perhaps so, who knows," he said, busying himself with a bottle and glasses. "Perhaps there are things to be learnt outside Casalarreina."

He poured out the wine with grave courtesy.

"But mostly evil," he added, with a frown creasing his forehead.

And there came a hard look on his face, like a man who has come upon a distasteful thing, and for a moment his thoughts seemed detached and wandering.

And then Asperillo, with what impulse urging him he knew not, of a sudden put his hand into his pocket and drew out a round, gold-framed miniature. And he thrust it into the Padre's hand with a swift, fierce insistence.

"Have you seen that face before?"

It was the face of a girl, singularly beautiful, with fair hair, and blue eyes, rare enough beauty in Spain to make one not forget having seen it. The priest's face underwent a remarkable change as his eyes dwelt on the little picture. His was a droll face that was made to bear a jest, and tragedy sat ill upon it. Yet his mouth was set very hard, and his black eyes flashed as he set them on Asperillo.

"Yes, I have seen this face before," he said, standing up with a strange look of alert defiance in his bearing.

"I am seeking her," said Asperillo simply.

There comes a point beyond which fury cannot go. For long, every thought of Shebah Zorzi had been like a flame to his dried-up heart. Yet here, conscious as he was that she was breathing the same air as himself, perhaps within the throw of a stone, he gave no sign of the hate and sorrow and despair that had consumed him.

"And you think that she is here?" demanded the priest, with a show of teeth.

"I know it."

Father Veja paused, as if deciding in his mind whether there was anything it were wise to conceal. Then he spoke, yet with the air of a man giving information grudgingly.

"Yes, she is here, in the convent. I have to hear confession there," he said very slowly, setting a pair of fierce eyes on Asperillo. And of a sudden he cried out, with almost incredible fierceness: "Are you, señor, the incomparable villain? Are you the man, curse his soul, who—"

Asperillo, the fire flashing back out of his own eyes, understood.

"I am not," he said. "I am the man who was deceived. I am the man seeking vengeance."

"On her?"

"On the man—presently. Though the English law has him now, my father, a prisoner, but that is not enough—eh? There is no penalty save death . . . for that . . . is it not?"

"Ha! . . . that the good God should let such men live!" muttered the priest. "But do you seek her now—for what?"

"I have business with her, my father."

"I think no one can see her," said the Padre Veja reflectively. "I think no one, though it is for the good Mother to decide. She is in the care of the Church now. She was not of our faith—no, though her mother was a good Catholic, it seems. Her father is a Jew. May he never find her to put her soul in peril. She is of the Church now."

Asperillo remained silent. He had not come to talk about the death of Israel Zorzi.

"Is this—this business immediate?" asked the priest.

"Yes."

"Very well, I shall see. By this afternoon I can tell you. Only I give you no hope. In some circumstances no business is of importance, because life is more than all—ah! and one cannot tell. Drink your wine, and I beg you, forget that it is not better . . . and, meanwhile, there is the question of your lodging. There is one, Miguel Toras, who lives in a house beside the Castello, which doubtless you saw when you came into the harbour. For a peseta he might be content to sleep on the floor and lend you the bed. One day he will probably be shot for smuggling. Meanwhile, he comes to vespers . . . and gives to the poor."

They reached the street together. Father Veja pointed the way which Asperillo must go. "He—Miguel—has no wife, but he knows how to cook. Bear him my recommendation."

The Castello lay out on a little bit of a jutting promontory, and was a ruin. It had been built by the dark-skinned conquerors of a thousand years ago, but the walls were still sturdy, though the courtyard was filled with a tangle of geraniums and maiden-hair, and lusty vines trailed over the masonry.

Where there was a hole in one of the thick walls, Miguel Toras had contrived a little dwelling, and roofed it over with slabs of slaty rock. He was an amiable person, with the face of a brigand, and the air of an aristocrat.

It seemed he occupied himself between fishing a little and attending to the garden of the convent on the hill, though, to be sure, he sometimes made journeys over the hills. He confided this information with a twinkle in his eyes, and with the air of one gentleman discussing a fact of mutual interest with another.

"But I am a sailor, señor," he said. "Some day I shall

take to the sea again. One runs risks in the hills now. Ha! those Guardias Civiles, they shoot!"

"So you work in the convent garden?" said Asperillo, sitting down in the shelter of a fig tree that grew out of a hole in the wall, with his eyes set on the brown building above the village.

"Yes; there are some things women cannot do, though they work, yes, they work. You would like coffee with your lunch—yes! Ha! I am the only man, save the Padre, ever admitted within those walls, and I but to the garden. But—yes, twenty years ago, a *caballero* came and scaled the walls. He came with two horses, mind you. And when he rode away, someone else was on the second horse. They reached San Fernando and were married. What would you?"

"Yet, few would be worth climbing a wall for?" observed Asperillo.

"Yes, true; and yet I have seen the face of one, señor, at a window. *Madre de Dios*, she had the face of an angel—hair of gold, eyes like the sea out yonder. Ha, *diablo!* that is the *estofado* burning."

He ran in to rescue the stew, while Asperillo gazed with heavy eyes at the brown building on the hill.

He went to the Padre Veja's house in the afternoon. "It's no use, my friend," said the priest, "your business will have to wait."

Asperillo was silent a long time. The weight of a big sorrow brings patience. And he thought many things as he sat there.

"Perhaps there are some things she had better not know . . . yet," he said. He looked hard into the priest's eyes as though he sought to find what manner of man this was. The eyes were those of an honest man.

"She is rich now," said Asperillo. "I want her to know that she can have money."

The priest shook his head. "I think she seeks only peace. But . . . yes, money has its uses."

"If I leave a sum of money with you, my Father," said Asperillo, "will you disburse it to her?"

"If you wish . . . and what else?"

"I will leave my address, so that you may write to me—if necessary."

"Yes, yes."

"And say no word, if it would frighten her, that one has been here seeking her."

"No flies enter a closed mouth," mumbled the priest.

The necessary details were soon completed. In the early darkness, by the light of a lamp that had been unchanged in design since the Greeks gave the pattern to Rome, they wrote down such things as were necessary. And then Asperillo went out under the stars. A little glimmering light burned in a shrine to the Virgin set in a Moorish wall. There was no other light in the narrow street. For most of the windows looked inward into patios, and blank walls were presented to the street.

The sight of the shrine seemed to focus his thoughts upon the nunnery on the hill, for it was called the Convent of the Blessed Virgin. And then, as though impelled by an unseen force, he began to grope his way thither. Those huge grim walls contained so much—sheltered that which he loved and hated. His own soul seemed buried there. It was the sepulchre of his dead heart.

Under a Moorish arch, that was narrow and deep like a cave, he went, finding himself out beyond the walls. The convent loomed dark above him. Up the rough winding track he climbed, drawn onwards by the strange magnetic power that seemed to have taken firm hold of him.

Amidst the mass of shadow that he knew was the building he saw a little gleaming light. When he came close under the walls he saw it was another little shrine like the one in the street below, a little painted figure of the Virgin standing in a recess in the wall, and a tiny dim little flame flickering from a wick floating in oil, lighting it up enough to show the peeling gilt and faded paint.

He looked hard at this—so poor and faded and mean, the symbol of that which was worshipped. The gold was only limed, the very mockery of a divinity.

He had worshipped. The pure gold of his divinity had proved to be only base metal. And the feet had been of clay.

He groped his way round the wall, feeling it with his hands, like something familiar, and searching the blind, barred windows with his eyes.

He turned at a corner, and went round another angle, stumbling over rocks, into thickets of prickly pear, into gullies and broken ways where the storm waters went.

It seemed to him he was walking about a big tomb. Here were death and silence. Here were contained dead lives. The moaning sea below sang the dirge—the death-song. And he listened. Alone in the dark.

Of a sudden, he saw the glimmer of a light shining behind one of the big barred windows directly above him, at first faintly, and then growing stronger. Someone was approaching who carried a lamp.

The light seemed to come from below, as though the window were on a staircase, and someone was ascending. He watched the illumination grow stronger with strangely fascinated eyes. And then of a sudden he saw a lamp borne in a woman's hand, a woman who was dressed in white. And while he watched a white face turned and drew to the window. It was a face framed in yellow hair. Snow-laden blue eyes looked out at the stars. For a moment the vision held, unearthly, pitiful, white lips parted, eyes staring out into nothing—as it were a soul gazing out of the grave. And then it went.

Juan Asperillo's hands uplifted to the darkened window in mute agony. He shook and awayed as though a storm beat upon him. Then, when words came to his lips, he could articulate nothing but her name.

"Shebah! Shebah!" he cried. "Shebah!"

And then he turned about as one demented. He ran wildly round the building till he got to where the light burned before the little shrine.

"There is no good on earth," he cried sobbingly, groping down on the ground among the loose stones, "nothing holy, nothing true," and he flung a stone at the glimmering light and the little painted Virgin.

There was a sound of tinkling glass as he ran swiftly away—and the dirge of the moaning sea.

"Vengeance! Vengeance!" he cried, as he ran. "Vengeance!"

He left the sea behind. He ran northward, as though he would reach on foot the land that sheltered the destroyer of his soul—and hers.

"Vengeance!" he sobbed as he ran into the darkness. And in the morning the good sisters, finding their little Madonna broken, and the glass of the lantern shattered, crossed themselves and pondered.

And Miguel Toras, in his dwelling among the ruins of the Castello above the harbour, wondered, over many cigarettes, what had become of his guest. At least, the twenty-five peseta note that had been offered to him in advance, and which, thanks to the saints, he had accepted, seemed good currency.

CHAPTER TWENTY. The Hanging Sword.

"A MARRIAGE has been arranged, and will shortly take place, between Miss Muriel Danebridge, daughter of the late Samuel Danebridge, of Surbiton, and Vincent Hartley, son of the late John Hartley, shipowner, of Great St. Helen's, E.C."

In that column headed "Fashionable Intelligence" this paragraph lay waiting to be read by those who had interest in the purchase and sale of human commodities. For, mark you, it is fashionable to acquire a name, or a dress allowance, or whatever mean thing a marriage is made for, and exceedingly unfashionable to refuse these tangible and substantial appurtenances because the heart has not been awakened.

The sheet was open on Juan Asperillo's knee. He was trying hard to read conscientiously through the displayed collection of edited news, for the modern newspaper is set out like a sweet counter, but he could not keep his attention fixed. The rattle of the train, the fleeting by of the murky country, and, perhaps, more than all, the storm of his own thoughts, made concentration upon this language, in which he sought to perfect himself, almost impossible.

He wanted the language for a purpose, and it was the purpose that had brought him back to England—that had sent him hurrying into the wild night at Casalarreina. It was what he had cried then to the rocks, and to the cold stars in his agony. "Vengeance! Vengeance!"

For the hatred of one man for another is only properly understood in a country like Spain, where the elemental passions are kept warm in the blood, and not over much learning chastens the brain and body. In many respects Spain is two centuries behind this fortunate island, where a deadly wrong may be compounded by the payment of money, and vengeance is usually a matter of police proceedings.

Here in this country, where we educate men like nobles, and condemn them to live like dogs; here, where one man may kill, body and soul, ten thousand of his kind, by taking their labour for a starvation wage, here it is forbidden for a man to take by the throat the enemy who has wronged him.

Asperillo looked out of the window a little while, though his eyes were turned inward, and he did not see the fleeing landscape any more than he had noticed the grey sea that afternoon, and the grey sky, and the bustle and movement of the ports. He was a man possessing a singular persistence and concentration, who, having put his hand to the plough, looked neither to the right nor the left.

He forced his eyes to the paper at length, and went on with his reading. The matters he read about had no interest to him, because they dealt exclusively with the affairs (and many a tragedy among them) of other people; but it was practice in the language, in the tongue, he needed for the work that lay before him. So presently he came to the column of "Fashionable Intelligence" aforementioned, and in due course discovered the paragraph that concerned those who had been associated with him in his tragedy.

So the woman to whom his enemy had been affianced was having her revenge this way. He remembered his words to her in Hartley's office:

"We are both wronged. And if he were here who has wronged us, I would strike him dead."

This discovery—the information which had come by means of this paragraph—set him on a new line of thought. He had calculated on some help from Hartley in the scheme which had been taking shape in his brain during his journey, but now it struck him that he might have to do without it.

For a man who has married a wife, or is going to, will often plead excuse from more things than feasts.

The precise method by which Jim Ellicott was to be delivered into his hands, so that he might fulfil the vow that he had sworn that night under the stars at Casalarreina, he did not know, but he believed the thing possible, because his great hate gave him faith in himself and his ability to do what he had purposed.

The miserably inadequate punishment of the law was not

enough. There was, in his own code of laws, but one repayment for what had been done. The life of the betrayer was forfeit to him. The law had failed to avenge him. Now it was for him to do what the law would not.

His greatest faith was in the money that had come to him from the legacy of Israel Zorzi. For he imagined that money would buy the faithfulness of those who guarded Jim Ellicott as easily as it buys the honesty of a Spanish minor official. In which presumption he was mistaken, though there was one man at Portmoor prison waiting to be suborned for a consideration.

There was no haste in the Spaniard's mind, only a steady, patient persistency, as one setting out upon a long journey that can only be covered by small, slow stages. Vengeance to him was a more real and more important thing than our northern minds can understand. In the seeking of vengeance a Spaniard will bring to bear that concentration and assiduity of application that a Briton will devote sometimes to his business, and frequently to sport.

His mind seldom left the consideration of the matter. He was always planning, always grappling with the difficulties that were presented, and withal, bringing to bear a dead-sureness that it seemed would carry him far.

On arrival he went first to the small city hotel where he had made his headquarters before, and then, having eaten, he went to the offices of John Hartley and Son, ship-owners, of Great St. Helen's, E.C.

The clerks were brushing their coats in preparation for departure when Asperillo's name was taken to the inner office. As was customary in this establishment, where sometimes it was considered desirable for those who called, and were in consultation, to not know who might wait without, the Spaniard's name was written on a piece of paper by the clerk, and put before the principal of the firm.

Hartley gave a little catch at his breath when he saw the name. He had been dwelling with a sword over his head these weeks while Asperillo had been away. For this man had gone to search for Shebah Zorzi. And now what? Had he found her, and learnt what she could tell?

For Shebah Zorzi had the knowledge that would lose him this game he played with his life and the lives of others.

Was this Asperillo come hungry for vengeance, knowing the truth? Was this the end—the fall of the sword?

The brooding fear that had clung to him for so long seemed to break out into an unrestrained panic. The fear on his face was plain to him in the little mirror that stood on his desk. If there had been another door he would have gone out by it. He had had the desire to flee, that he could not fight down. For he knew the temper of Juan Asperillo, who would have no mercy.

He had never quite lost sight of the fact that Shebah Zorzi held him, as it were, in the hollow of her hand. It had been an ever-present fear during the trial that she might be found, and then, when the days went by, and though a man's life hung in the balance, her hiding-place was never discovered, the belief came to him that she was far out of reach, and that she had succeeded well in both hiding herself and covering her tracks. And he had lulled himself into believing that she would never come into light again, perhaps was dead—believing what he wanted to believe.

The clerk looked at him interrogatively.

"Er—yes, show him in," said Hartley, with his grey lips loose and out of control.

The moment the man was gone, with a swift movement he unlocked and opened a drawer in his desk. A revolver was lying upon some papers there. His hand closed convulsively over the weapon, and he held it under the desk as Asperillo entered, his finger on the trigger—waiting—waiting.

"Ha! *amigo*, what a country this is," said Asperillo, sinking into a chair with a sigh; "fog—wet—many people."

"Yes?" said Hartley, moistening his lips as though his mouth were too dry for speech.

"After the sunshine I have left behind," added Asperillo, feeling in his pocket. The movement made Hartley pull his right hand up from beneath the desk an inch or two. The trigger seemed to be burning his finger like a red-hot wire. But the artist drew nothing more alarming from his pocket than a cigarette, one of those ungummed Spanish affairs with folded-up ends. With quiet deliberation he unfasted the ends, rolled the tobacco a little tighter, and gave the edge an adhesiveness of a kind by moistening it on his tongue.

"So—you have come back," said Hartley, with a peculiar little huskiness, like that when the throat is dry. The waiting was agony to him. He could feel his heart hammering like a piston. He was like a man pulling lots from a bag among which was one marked death.

"Have you found her—found Shebah Zorzi?" he asked.

"Yes, I have found her," answered the Spaniard, with his face growing suddenly hard. "*Madre de Dios*, yes; and now I have come back for my revenge."

Hartley's hand went up a little further. He waited, breathless, for the next word. But it was not what he expected. It came into his mind that the Spaniard was playing him—like a fish.

"*Cielos*, but my task was not easy," he said. "I can hardly tell you where I have been. It was after all, very much guess-work tracing her, though I had a clue—a little one. I never thought she would go anywhere but Spain—where her childhood had been spent. Moreover, one may hide in Spain—for a life. But where? Seville, where her mother's people live? No, not there, not where some might know her. Though I went there, with a still tongue and open ears, because one never knows. And, besides, the other place was far and difficult to reach. The place was one I had seen in a little sketch that hung upon the wall of her room. It was that of a little white-walled village where the sea was blue beneath it, and the hills brown above it. It had been painted, señor, before she had learned to handle colour—as one desires. It had been done years ago. It still hangs on the wall in the empty house. Because it is not a good sketch, I wondered why she had kept it there—for there are others, better. Then I thought it was perhaps for the sake of the place, or, perhaps, a memory of it, and I took it down from the nail. There

FOR THE BEST AND
FULLEST REPORTS OF FOOTBALL

read the London

Daily Express

On sale at all Newsagents' and Bookstalls
throughout the Country.

was written in her own hand at the back of it a verse in Spanish:

"Here is peace. The madding world knows it not.
Here one may rest and hide for ever, dwelling
Under the eye of Heaven. Forgetting sorrow and pain,
Finding hope in forgetfulness."

"I translate badly, señor. That is the meaning of it, and there was the name of the place. But it was a name common in Spain. There are many *pueblos* called by it, so that it was not found in a day, the one of the picture."

"But you found it—the right one?" said Hartley.

"Yes."

"And you did—what you went out to do?"

"Yes."

"Her attitude—her reception of you?" A suffocating feeling seemed to seize Hartley as though a hand were on his throat.

"I did not have speech with her," said Asperillo.

"Ha!"

Hartley felt something give way in him like the breaking of a violin string. The weapon that was grasped in his right hand slipped through his fingers, and fell with a crash on the floor under his desk. The weakness usually comes after the danger is passed.

He stooped down to pick up the revolver—and to hide his face. The weapon had slipped right underneath, and the shining muzzle of it was just visible to Asperillo. He stooped and picked it up with a puzzled expression on his face, and during the moment he held it in his hand before he handed it back he saw that it was loaded in every chamber.

"I had got it out to clean it," said Hartley, "just before you came in. My elbow knocked it off the ledge here. Thanks. I always keep a weapon in my desk, since I was attacked in this office by a half-crazy sailor who had a grievance. And this place—where is it to be found?"

"No, señor, that I keep to myself."

"I was wondering if anything—might be done for her," murmured Hartley softly with his eyes on the shining thing that lay on the desk in front of him.

"No man can do anything for her—now!" returned Asperillo, with a sudden swift fierceness.

"Ah! You will return there some time?" questioned Hartley.

"Yes—afterwards," returned the Spaniard. "It is my duty to see that her money goes aright—to her hands—afterwards."

"After what?"

"I have avenged her," said the other.

"The law?"

"Is no avenger, señor. The man is living. I am going to kill him, and then, afterwards, I shall go to Shebah."

Hartley was silent. He seemed to see, as it were, through a glass, darkly, the things that were to be. He was as one drifting on a river, and seeing afar off danger spots he must pass, where there were rocks and troubled waters.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE.

Liberty!

Those men who are honest because it is the best policy generally have no great morality to speak of, since it is no admirable quality to make virtue of an expediency. Why dishonesty is to be avoided is by reason of the fact that the law of average shows that it seldom escapes being found out.

When, therefore, Joseph Bowles deflected from the path of strict rectitude, it can only be supposed that the advantage got very heavy on the other side, on the side of dishonesty, or that he imagined that the law of average might be suspended in his case.

For he was not without opportunity of observing at first hand (or eye) that dishonesty, when found out, has a very poor time of it, since his post and station in life was that of under-warder at Portmoor prison. It was he who wrote, in Roman characters, on a slip of paper, which Jim Ellicott found inside his small brown loaf one morning, this query:

"Would you escape if you had the chance?"

It had been ingeniously inserted in the loaf, by way of a slit in the bottom of it, and it was Mr. Bowles' way of sounding the prisoner's feeling on the matter, because he had known instances of prisoners refusing to take the risk of an escape which in nine cases out of ten (the gentle novelist notwithstanding) meant recapture, punishment, and an augmentation of sentence. And Mr. Bowles was essentially cautious. It was in a very roundabout way that he had received this commission.

Quite a number of gentlemen, who were specialists in particular and peculiar lines that they were careful not to advertise, and who betrayed a striking modesty in keeping their names out of the little commissions they undertook, were concerned in it.

Juan Asperillo, with a fee in his pocket, had, in the first place, consulted frankly a respectable lawyer. This gentleman had been naturally somewhat taken aback by the Spaniard's proposition, but he earned his fee by first strongly dissuading the other to abandon his project of getting his friend out of prison, and then recommending him to consult another man, whose name he mentioned, who (*entre nous*) might, if not entertaining such a proposition himself, put monsieur, or was it señor, on the track of someone who might consider this altogether irregular thing, which, etc., etc.

And so Asperillo sought the second gentleman, with another fee in his pocket. The move, while not of actual practical results, was distinctly a step forward, for the second practitioner of the law didn't appear to have any conscientious scruples in the matter, but merely expressed an opinion that the thing was too big an order for him to undertake; but that, ha!—well, he could give him the name of a man whose speciality was the negotiating of delicate matters, and though, of course, while he could not guarantee that this individual (he had lately been struck off the rolls) would touch the matter, there was the chance

that he might do something. Delightful weather, wasn't it—er, no! Well, everybody to his choice, of course. No, a receipt for the six-and-eightpence was not necessary.

The lawyer, who had been struck off the rolls, presumably for handling the law to his own advantage more than professional custom deemed expedient, had listened to Asperillo's proposals with attentive consideration, the more so when the latter mentioned that he was ready to spend a considerable sum in effecting his purpose.

Of course, the commission was absolutely confidential. There were considerable risks to be run, and risks were expensive things to pay for. It would be necessary to pay a preliminary fee of twenty pounds to start the negotiations in a quarter that might—or might not—bear fruit.

Tact, patience, knowledge, and discretion were required in just that quantity and proportion that this excellent gentleman possessed, and all should be at the disposal of his client. At the same time, while the latter might grow impatient at what might seem the slow progress made, he must remember that running against the might of the British law was a big thing, and required delicate handling.

This ex-solicitor was discreet in more ways than one. He accurately gauged how much money the young man would part with willingly, and he did not allow his fees to exceed that sum, and, at the same time, he made clear to Asperillo that, in the conspiracy they were engaged in, both in the eyes of the law were committing a felony, and both, in the event of discovery, would be made to suffer equally.

To his credit, the ex-gentleman by letters patent, set about the work with due diligence, and by devious ways and through several agents, about which, and of whom it were better not to inquire too closely, he got in communication with the man who was willing to sell his trust at a price. That man was Joseph Bowles, who sent the message to Jim Ellicott in his breakfast bread as an opening.

On the other side of the slip of paper were some brief instructions for answering.

"Smear on back of plate: 'Yes or no!'"

(Another long instalment next week.)

"So you wish to take my daughter away from me!" remarked her doting father, after the Christmas festivities.

"Well—ah, that wasn't just exactly my thought," stammered the nervous young suitor. "My people could perhaps spare me with fewer pangs!"

SHE: "Very slippery coming home, was it not?"

HE: "Oh, very."

"Couldn't keep your feet, I suppose?"

"Oh, yes, I did manage to keep them; but they changed places with the back of my neck several times."

THE HUMAN KIDNEY AVERAGE NATURAL SIZE.

THERE are two kidneys, situated in the loins. If the hands are laid on the back, on each side of the spine on the two lowest ribs, they will press over the kidneys. In size each kidney is about 4 inches long, 2½ wide, and 1½ thick, weighing about 4½ oz. Their work is to filter the blood after it has passed through the body and before its return to the heart purified for re-use, while the uric acid, superfluous watery and other waste matters are expelled from the body through the urinary system. The whole of the blood is filtered every three minutes. It will at once be seen that sickness must follow if the kidneys grow weak or become diseased, and, therefore, unable to keep the blood pure. Poisons accumulate in the blood, and the body cannot be healthy unless the blood is healthy. Diseased or weak kidneys are the true cause of

**BACKACHE, CONSTANT TIREDNESS, RHEUMATISM, DROPSY,
URINARY DISORDERS, BLADDER WEAKNESS, GRAVEL,
and other KIDNEY and BLADDER DISEASES.**

THE following is the case of Mr. J. Hardingham, 109 Great College Street, Camden Town, London, N.W.

In JULY, 1903, Mr. Hardingham wrote:—

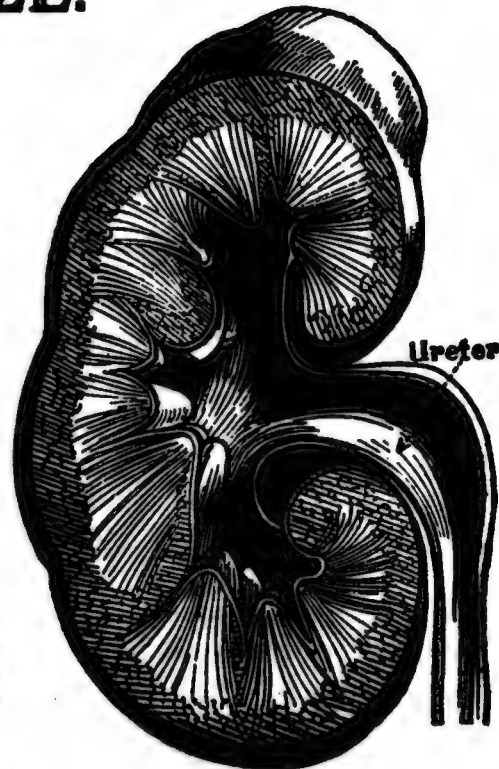
"Gentlemen,—Before I used Doan's Backache Kidney Pills I suffered with severe pains around my loins and hips, and there was a scalding sensation in passing the kidney secretions, which were of a sandy colour. Night and day I was troubled with a dull headache, and I became dreadfully low-spirited and nervous. I lost my appetite, and, in fact, I was altogether weak and run down. Doan's Pills put me right, and have made me feel twice the man I was.—Yours truly,

(Signed) J. HARDINGHAM."

On OCTOBER 14th, 1905—over two years later—Mr. Hardingham was good enough to pay us a visit, when he told us that his health was still first-rate.

And in JULY, 1906—three years after his cure—one of our representatives met Mr. Hardingham, who said he had remained well ever since Doan's Backache Kidney Pills cured him.

Doan's Backache Kidney Pills are 25 a box, or 125 for 6 boxes. They cannot be bought loose, but only in the boxes, which may be had of all chemists and stores, or direct, post free, from the Foster-McClellan Co., 8 Wells Street, Oxford Street, London, W.



Doan's Backache Kidney Pills.

Should Railways have One Class Only?



By a Railway Manager.

Some authorities are inclined to go further and assert that here, as in the United States, passenger traffic as a whole is probably non-productive in itself, and should only be looked upon as a sort of gigantic advertisement for the certainly more profitable merchandise and mineral traffic.

But be that as it may, it is certain that where profit can be shown to be derived directly from the conveyance of passengers such profit arises from the third class traffic.

This was not always the case, but the gradual improvement in third class accommodation led to a great increase in the proportion of travellers using the cheapest class of vehicle and a corresponding decrease in the superior classes.

No small share of the credit of popularising and fostering third class travel is due to the Midland Company, which, in 1872, startled the railway world by announcing that it would in future convey third class passengers by all trains. And later on it abolished the second class carriage.

92'S PER CENT. TRAVEL THIRD CLASS.

From this time third class traffic increased in a remarkable degree, until at the present time no less than 92'6 per cent. of the railway passengers in the British Isles travel by it. The figures for 1905 being: First class, 38,414,492; second class, 52,583,258; third class, 1,110,024,362.

The question then arises as to whether it is reasonable to maintain separate classes for the 7 per cent. of the travelling public still willing to pay higher fares in return for a greater degree of comfort.

If one description of accommodation were deemed sufficient—and the provision of a type of carriage but slightly superior to the third class vehicles now running on the great lines should meet all reasonable requirements—the railways would be enabled to increase in many directions the facilities they afford.

Apart from the actual cost of the vehicles themselves, the economies which would follow the working of the traffic with practically but one class of car (a few special vehicles would always be required) would be very great.

For instance, the immense sums now yearly sunk in marshalling trains would be reduced to a surprising extent, a large amount of empty mileage now run would be avoided, and the number of cars in many trains could be reduced.

HOW ECONOMY WOULD BE EFFECTED.

Nor would the general economy and simplification in working be confined to the actual movement of the trains. The varieties of tickets stocked at stations could be cut down to less than one-half, while the work of booking, and the subsequent checking and account-keeping, would be very appreciably lightened.

From all commercial points of view, therefore, the class system should be abolished. If this were done what effect would it have upon the travelling public?

Of course, if the idea had been seriously broached twenty or even ten years back, it would have been ridiculed, but the increasing use of street cars and the advent of the Tube Railways has taught us much.

Of course, as can be seen, the average passenger has everything to gain by the change, but it is equally obvious that there will always be a section of the public whose natural inclinations will call for a little more privacy than could be obtained in a standard car. It is from this class that the principal opposition will be forthcoming when any change is seriously contemplated.

But if the companies once decide on business grounds to experiment, the conservative ideas of a body representing now but 7 per cent. of the travelling public, and whose numbers decrease in proportion annually as the volume of general traffic expands, could be overcome—so far as privacy is concerned, at any rate—by placing one of the standard cars in each train under the direct charge of a train attendant—admission to this reserved car being obtainable only on payment of a supplementary fare.

The adoption of some such a system of reserved accommodation would be a stepping stone towards the simplest method of passenger working imaginable.

THERE can be no doubt but that from the railway point of view the "one class of carriage only" idea has much to commend it.

In the first place, on account of the simplified working which the adoption of such a system would make possible; and, secondly, because of the great economies in many departments which would naturally follow. A third reason may be said to lie in the fact that, broadly speaking, first and second class traffic does not pay.

HARRYING THE HIGHLANDERS.

THE feeling aroused in Scotland by the threatened removal of the Scots Greys, as voiced by Lord Rosebery, at Edinburgh the other day, has had some curious parallels in times past.

When, for instance, in 1743, the famous Black Watch was decoyed to London by a trick, in order to be sent to Flanders, the entire regiment started back to Scotland on its own initiative as soon as it discovered the deception that had been practised upon it.

Nor was it really acting wrongly in so doing, for the conditions under which the Highlanders had been enlisted precluded their being called upon to serve outside their own country. The English Government, however, was obdurate, as well as merciless. The gallant corps was pursued, overtaken, brought back, and the leaders shot.

Scotland was furious, and when later on the Seaforth Highlanders were attempted to be treated after a similar fashion, the citizens of Edinburgh helped the soldiers entrench themselves on the hills overlooking the city, and swore roundly that not a man of them should be permitted to set foot on English soil.

Yet a third case related to the old 79th, which it was proposed to disband, the men to be then drafted amongst four English regiments. Meetings to protest were held all over Scotland, and war with England even was openly advocated in connection with the incident.

In the end the Government gave in. But it took a petty as well as a cruel revenge. The regiment was ordered straight from the snows of the Highlands to the West Indies, at just the most unhealthy season of the year, with the foreseen result that several hundreds of the officers and men promptly sickened and died.

THE RECORD CRIMINAL EXPLOSION.

It seems now pretty certain—what has all along been suspected—that the terrible explosion at the Annen roborite works, by which an entire town was destroyed and hundreds of people killed, was purposely caused, dynamite cartridges having been found amongst the ruins of the factory buildings.

If this be really so, then it will take rank as the most terrible criminal explosion that has ever happened. The next worst, probably, was that which turned the quay at Bremerhaven into a shambles on December 11th, 1875.

On this latter occasion a man named Thomson consigned a cask of dynamite as ordinary freight, to be conveyed to New York by the North German Lloyd steamer, *Mosel*. In the hollow head of the barrel was a clockwork machine, designed to explode the dynamite when the vessel was well out at sea.

The stevedores who were loading the heavy cask, however, dropped it on the quay with a thud, and it blew up prematurely, killing eighty persons, and wounding above 200 others, mostly emigrants and their friends.

Another terrible criminal explosion was that at Cripple Creek, Colorado, a short while ago, when a big tenement house occupied by a number of non-union miners was blown up at dead of night, and all the occupants killed.

In Britain, outrages of this description have happily been rare, save during the exceptional years covered by the Irish dynamitards' campaign, when attempts were made to blow up the Tower, the Houses of Parliament, the Nelson Column, and other public buildings.

Fortunately, however, these criminal explosions were generally unattended by loss of life, almost the solitary exception being the attempt to blow up the Salford barracks on January 14th, 1881, when a little boy was killed. If, however, the attempt which was made shortly afterwards to blow up the Glasgow gas-works had not miscarried, a holocaust would have almost assuredly resulted that would have probably surpassed even the recent one at Annen.

£10 For a Story.

In order to encourage those who write stories we will give a prize of £10 to the author who sends us before the closing date what we consider to be the best story, not exceeding 2,500 words in length.

All manuscripts must be typewritten. Each competitor may send us as many attempts as he or she likes.

The Editor has the right to use any of the stories, for which payment will be made.

All manuscripts considered unsuitable for publication will be returned if accompanied by a stamped and addressed envelope. But the Editor will not take responsibility for loss of or damage to manuscripts.

The closing date is Monday, January 7th, 1907.

Envelopes should be addressed to the Editor, *Pearson's Weekly*, Henrietta Street, London, W.C., and should be marked with the words "Ten Pound Story" in the top left-hand corner.

THERE is a popular belief abroad that women like masterful, persistent lovers—men who display a determination to break down all opposition on the part of a girl, parents, or rival by the mere force and vigour of their wooing, who heroically laugh at snubs, or, at any rate, pretend they do, and impress you with the idea that discouragement only increases their resolution to win the girl of their choice.

This was my view, until the girl to whose heart I laid a most vigorous siege, finding that hints did not deter my ardour, plainly told me that I was becoming a nuisance, and was "not at home" next time I called.

Even then, however, I refused to be turned from my desire; but when the father and the brother of the girl waited upon me, and expressed their intention of curing my passion by deeds if words failed, I sorrowfully came to the conclusion that I had better stop.

Maybe some girls find it difficult to forgive the timid lover, whom one rival is sufficient to send into the background, or whom one rebuff discourages in his wooing. But only in the world of romancers will you find that delightfully fascinating creature who will consent to wed the infatuated individual she has perpetually snubbed, and whose proposals she has rejected half a dozen times, simply because he persists in worrying her.

DON'T MAKE LOVE VIOLENTLY.

Love-making was never meant to be a violent proceeding in real life. It is a game of subtle strategy. Find the weak points of a girl, and play upon them.

The passionate, persistent Adonis loses whatever advantage his looks and achievements may have gained owing to the fact that he becomes a bore; and, moreover, it is difficult to believe in his sincerity. His tactics are too overbearing.

A few quiet words, at an appropriate moment, conveying esteem and admiration, are far more likely to make an impression on the heart and mind of the average girl than a flow of extravagant compliments, praises and vows, which are usually regarded with more amusement than appreciation.

I repeat, find the weak points of a girl, and play upon them. Her hobbies, work, pleasures, and recreations form a near road to a girl's heart. No matter how paltry, petty, or foolish her crazes may seem to you, pretend that you think well of them because they belong to her.

What if her ambitions never soar above the collecting of picture postcards or sea-shells? She will be all the more ready to listen to your proposal when she knows that you sympathise with her.

Despise or laugh at nothing which a woman does. Ridiculous though it may sound, I actually won my wife through giving her one or two hints as to the manner in which she might amuse herself by trying to grow miniature oak, apple and plum trees in the skin of an orange filled with mould.

A WORD ABOUT PROPOSALS.

She was seized with the craze after reading something about it in a weekly periodical. I sympathised, and endeavoured to help with knowledge gained from slight gardening experience; and thus the way was opened to a friendship which ultimately ended in wedding bells.

And now a word regarding proposals.

Nothing is more essential to the final success of a wooing than to know exactly when to declare the all-absorbing passion, what to say, and how to say it. To propose too soon is often fatal, for the simple reason that a girl is apt to be flurried and embarrassed, in consequence of which she may say "No" when she means "Yes."

On the other hand, to delay is often equally fatal. For a proposal deferred may afford a rival lover an opportunity of stepping in and gaining the prize.

If you are conscious enough to think that a girl favours your suit, do not delay the proposal. If she listens deferentially to your conversation, shows no reluctance to remain in your society, exhibits an interest in your doings, and seems pleased with any favours you extend towards her, you may take it that the time is ripe for a proposal.

Don't propose by letter, however. How can a man expect a girl to be thrilled by a declaration of love in cold black and white? A lover who proposes by letter loses 50 per cent. of his chances of success, for the simple reason that he is not there to add warmth and pleasing persuasion.

After all, there is some truth in the suggestion that what is worth having is worth asking for.

Wrinkles for Wife-Winners



By a Wooer of Experience.

Gout Rheumatism Sciatica and Neuralgia Cured

Genoform cures these painful complaints. Nothing eases the pain and cures so quickly. Its action is wonderful. It is the one remedy for Gout, Rheumatism, Sciatica, and Neuralgia, has no after effects, and is quite harmless. If you suffer try this genuine remedy, and if testimony is of any value we can send you plenty.

RHEUMATISM.

Genoform gives relief in the first few hours, and effects a permanent and complete cure. Genoform is largely prescribed by the medical profession who have themselves tested its efficacy. Of all chemists, or post free from sole agents. Price 1/3 and 2/3 post free. Write for testimonials.

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DANGER IN SOAPS.



MEN AS WELL AS
WOMEN SHOULD
WATCH THE CON-
DITION OF THEIR
SKIN.

Soap for the face is dangerous—the caustic alkali that most kinds contain shrivels and dries the skin—robs it of its natural oil, so that the first cold wind cracks and chaps. In most kinds, too, animal fat with its dangers of putrescence and partial decomposition, even if quite sound when made into soap, is ever present.

Think of these facts and from to-day treat your face fairly. Give nature a chance to make you beautiful.

Oatine cleanses nature's way. It removes from the pores those accumulations of dust and dirt that soap and water can never reach. It brings the beauty of health to the plainest face, for a perfect complexion is the essence of beauty.

Oatine is pure, free from animal fats and chemicals. It banishes wrinkles and the so-called signs of age.

Every man who values comfort, appreciates true cleanliness and desires an attractive appearance should use it regularly, particularly after shaving.

Oatine FACE CREAM

BETTER THAN SOAP.

Is made from the essential oil of the finest oats—nature's greatest aid to natural beauty. A jar will cost you only 1/3, or a larger size, containing four times the quantity, 2/6.

OUR OFFER.

Send us to-day either 3d. in stamps or the lid of a 3/6 Jar of Oatine and we will send you, free of cost, samples of all the Oatine Preparations, including Oatine Balm, a soothing lotion that will purify the skin. Oatine Face Powder non-poisonous, non-irritant. Oatine Talcum Powder. Oatine Tooth Paste. Oatine Soap, and "Kyllets," a real dyspepsia cure. With these preparations we will send you a copy of our book, "Beauty Hints."

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109 DENMAN STREET, LONDON, S.E.

EVERY MAN

SUFFERING from NERVOUS and PHYSICAL DEBILITY should use for a valuable Pamphlet explaining how all Nervous and Organic Derangements and Varieties may be successfully treated without the use of disease-creating and debilitating drugs. All interested should send 4d. in P.O. or by cheque to the Tribune Publishing Company, 11, 12, 13, Fleet Street, London, E.C. when instructions and advice on the above will be forwarded the sender for a whole year. Doctors' bills augment our title, THE NATURE CURE p. events them.

THE NATURE CURE.

Important to all sufferers from Consumption, Bronchitis, Asthma, Catarrhs, and all Chest complaints. Also to sufferers from Rheumatism, Heart Disease, and Dyspepsia. Learn to treat yourself and obtain a CURE by NATURE'S METHODS without the use of disease-creating and debilitating drugs. All interested should send 4d. in P.O. or by cheque to the Tribune Publishing Company, 11, 12, 13, Fleet Street, London, E.C. when instructions and advice on the above will be forwarded the sender for a whole year. Doctors' bills augment our title, THE NATURE CURE p. events them.

DR. WILSON'S



To restore
gray or
faded
hair

From all
Hair-
Dressers
and
Chemists

HAIR RESTORER

PARSON SON & CO., BIRMINGHAM

Bronchitis

PEPS

will Heal and Soothe all
Bronchial Soreness and
Inflammation.



Are you troubled with a nasty, irritating, and painful cough every time the cold weather comes round? A tickling in the throat, tightness in the region of the breastbone, loss of voice on rising in the morning, heavy and laboured breathing, sometimes giving rise to sense of suffocation? Do you instinctively fear the cold, damp, foggy days? Are you very susceptible to chill? Are you obliged to cough incessantly in church or in public meetings; do you often feel a desire to "clear your throat"?

If any of these things trouble you, Bronchitis has claimed you for a victim.

Bronchitis drains the vigour of the strong and permanently cripples the aged and weak. It kills off more old people than any other single disease. Hence the importance of speedily adopting some safe and certain treatment possessing a direct influence on the actual tissues of the throat and lungs, which are the tissues affected.

This is essentially the treatment afforded by Peps. As they dissolve on the tongue, Peps emit all the rich pine fumes with which they are stored; and these pine essences, as the breath is taken in, bathe the membranes of the throat and bronchial tubes. Peps (unlike liquid medicines, which are merely swallowed into the stomach) thus bring a powerful antiseptic and healing agency into direct contact with the tissues injured by incessant coughing. These pine fumes quickly subdue the inflammation which is the beginning of bronchitis, and repair the injured membranes; while the accumulation of phlegm (which prevents the easy passage of air between the lungs and mouth) is more easily got rid of, and the delicate air tubes are strengthened and fortified against the perils of these changeable, lung-chilling, and fast-wetting days.

Peps bring relief in the most advanced cases of Bronchitis, and, if persevered with, will so repair and strengthen the tissues that the disease is entirely driven from the system. No longer are the lungs worn and torn by incessant coughing. No longer is the breath obtained with difficulty when eased by Peps; and no longer is there oppression, pain, and tightness about the chest. No home should be without a box of Peps.

A FREE TRIAL.

Make your own free test of PEPs by sending this Coupon and 1d. stamp to the PEPs PASTILLE CO., CARLTON HILL, LEEDS, when a liberal sample packet will be sent to you free.

Pearson's Weekly, Dec. 20/03.

Peps provide a safe and scientific remedy for coughs and colds of all kinds, bronchitis, asthma, sore throat, huskiness, loss of voice, relaxed throat, laryngitis, croup, whooping cough, influenza, and other diseases of the throat and lungs. Peps are simply invaluable to public speakers, teachers, preachers, politicians, lawyers, actors, singers, and all subject to habitual vocal efforts.

Peps

A Pine Forest in Every Home

Obtainable of all Chemists at 1/4 or 2/6 per box (large family size) or post free, at the same price, from the Peps Pastille Co., Carlton Hill, Leeds.

The Very Thing! Just what we are looking for. John Thridgould & Co.'s



18 Christmas Cards SEASONABLE Novelties. 18.

Don't miss this. Never before has such a Shilling's worth been offered. Nothing prettier or better could be wished for.

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR PRESENTS.

You get the whole of the following splendid new assortment:

- A most desirable selection of TWENTY-FOUR CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR CARDS, POST-CARDS, GREETINGS, &c. All most beautiful looking and carefully designed. Published in sets of 24, 3d. and 6d. each. Among the designs will be found—
- CHARMING FLOREAL STUDIES. Fragrant flowers in pretty glass vases.
- THE ART GEM PENDANT. Three-fold. Fine glass. A very taking design.
- FIFTY ORIGINS AWAKENING— or "Dear your Mother know you're out!"
- MY FRIENDS' MOTIV CAR. An ingenious "What do you think?"—with Christmas Greetings.
- FACE AND GOODWILL CALENDAR. Showing how your friends' faces blossom with cheer and good designs, to hang.
- WINNING DAYS OF HAPPINESS.

In all Twenty-four Presents—a fascinating assortment that, if bought in the ordinary way, would cost at least five shillings.

The whole of the above will be sent, securely packed, on receipt of P.O. for 1s. and 2 stamps to defray postage; or two different assorted Presents, P.O. 2s. and 3d. for Parcel Post.

PACKETS OF LARGE ENVELOPES TO FIT CARDS, 1s. each.

Christmas cards and for Wholesale Catalogues and Samples of CHRISTMAS CARDS, NOVETIES, &c., post free 5 stamps. GREATEST HOUSE IN LONDON.

JOHN THRIDGOULD & CO. (DEPT. P.W.),
18 & 20 SONEY STREET, COMMERCIAL ROAD, LONDON, E. (ESTAB. 1851).

HEADACHE CURED IN 10 MINUTES.

One dose only of Kaputine cures in ten minutes the most violent Headache or Neuralgia. We want to prove this to every sufferer, and in order to do so will send you two free sample doses of Kaputine by return post.

Write to C. H. KAPUTINE, LIDGET STREET, MIDDLESBROUGH.

Kaputine is sold by Chemists and Stores everywhere. Packets of 10 doses, 1/-; Samples 1d.

The Weather and Bronchitis

From 9 Colville Road, Sparkhill, Birmingham, October, 20th, 1903. "Since 1899 I had bronchitis more or less according to the weather. Scott's Emulsion suited me and my breath came easier with the Evidence every dose; put on flesh and soon felt much stronger. In three or four months Scott's Emulsion completely cured my bronchitis and I feel I shall never have it again. I can now brave any sort of weather, damp or cold."

CHARLES WILLIAM CROW

SCOTT'S EMULSION

The mark by which you may know Scott's Emulsion is "The Fishman with the fish."

A superior quality, purity and vigour of all the ingredients used in Scott's Emulsion and the perfection of the Scott process which, by making the oil easily digestible by the most delicate system, secures the full benefit of the mag-nificent nourishment contained in it—these are the reasons why Scott's cured Mr. Crow when everything else failed.

Free trial bottle and "A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A CHILD" for postage (4d) from Scott & Bowne, Ltd., 10-11 Stonecutter St., London, E.C. Name this paper.

Mab! Razor

The description given of the "MAB" is the FINEST SHAVING IMPLEMENT THE WORLD IS CONFIRMED BY THOUSANDS OF TESTIMONIALS.

SWAMP, Street Handle. "MAB SPECIAL" Narrow Blade. MAB Co., Newhall Street, BIRMINGHAM.

HAVE YOU A COLO? DR. MACKENZIE'S CATARRH CURE SMELLING-BOTTLE. IMMEDIATELY CURE COLD IN THE HEAD, INFLUENZA, NERVOUS HEADACHE, OR HAY FEVER. Instantly relieves Neuralgia in the Head, Painful and Discomfort. Sold by all Chemists and Stores. Price One Shilling, or Post free 14 Stamps, from MACKENZIE'S Cure Depot, London. N.B.—Narrow Blade.

CHRISTMAS & PICTORIAL POSTCARDS

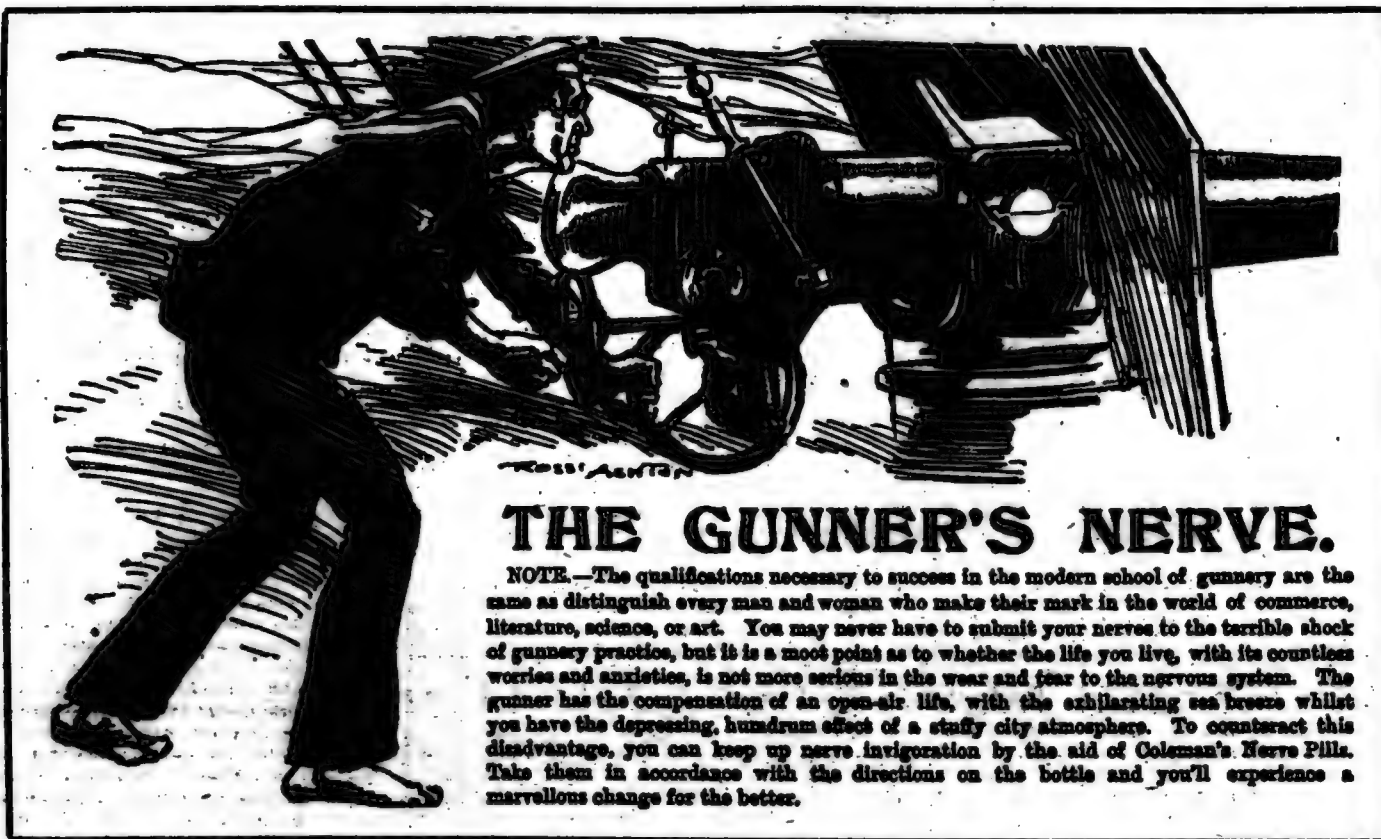
Exclusive range of Art direct from publishers at half usual price. Thousands of NEW DESIGNS now ready. Lovely colours and precise work. Marvels of quality and cheapness.

12 Society Christmas Cards with all bows. Very smart. 1/-
25 Dainty " all folders, all cards, etc. 1/-
25 Choice " Postcards. The latest. 1/-
25 Highest quality Postcards. Every design. Views, Animals, etc. 1/-
Or one each all different for 5/-
All post free. Full list from Agents Wanted.
CENTRAL CARD AGENCY, 20-22, Gower Street, London, W.C.

COLEMAN'S NERVE PILLS

TRADE "NERVLETTES" MARK

GIVE INCREASED NERVE POWER AND REMOVE HEADACHE AND DEPRESSION



THE GUNNER'S NERVE.

NOTE.—The qualifications necessary to success in the modern school of gunnery are the same as distinguish every man and woman who make their mark in the world of commerce, literature, science, or art. You may never have to submit your nerves to the terrible shock of gunnery practice, but it is a moot point as to whether the life you live, with its countless worries and anxieties, is not more serious in the wear and tear to the nervous system. The gunner has the compensation of an open-air life, with the exhilarating sea breeze whilst you have the depressing, humdrum effect of a stuffy city atmosphere. To counteract this disadvantage, you can keep up nerve invigoration by the aid of Coleman's Nerve Pills. Take them in accordance with the directions on the bottle and you'll experience a marvellous change for the better.

THE REMEDY SENT FREE OF CHARGE.

PLAIN TALKS BY THE SPECIALIST: XV. EXCESS.

I want to urge you to consider the vital importance of nerve control. You are doubtless recklessly wasting (like the rest of City men and women) the most important asset of life—viz., NERVE FORCE.

What problem has engaged the minds of the medical world during the past half century more than any other one thing?

Just this: How to prevent the reckless waste of nerve force among the brainy men and women of our great commercial centres.

And what becomes of the man who refuses to listen to the voice of reason, who is too excited by competitive zeal to pause and think?

Lord Rosebery, at Bangour, in Linlithgowshire, the other day, said:—

"That official statistics showed that during the time in which our population was increased by 75 per cent, our lunatics were increasing at the rate of 231 per cent. The capital invested in lunatic asylums in the United Kingdom amounted to no less than 24½ millions of pounds, and the annual expenditure of keeping these lunatics was 2½ millions."

Men grow old before their time because they do not try to keep young.

And why? Because they are unaware of the work of the nerves. Very few people realise that every palpitation of the heart is governed by the nerve cells, and that EXCESS of wear, tear, and strain reacts on the nervous system disastrously, resulting often in physical bankruptcy.

Excess—and what do we mean by excess? Simply, that as a people we are, or are becoming, excessively excitable, irritable, morbid, eager, nervous; the pulse throbs with the delirium of money-making.

If Dr. Oser ever said that a man ought to be pensioned off at forty, he meant an inveterate waster of nerve force, a man who, by reason of excess of zeal in everything he undertook, recklessly shattered the nerves until the result was painfully evident in wreckage.

Lord Rosebery suggests a remedy in the teaching of a higher and better system of life, in the prevention of incessant restlessness and worry.

But all the teaching in the world will not stop the ambitions from seeking to conquer the problems of the day in this thinking and working world.

The student will continue to "crum" and the merchant to "worry," and both will end in "brain-fag," and perhaps "insanity," unless they halt and recuperate.

The true remedy is to find something that will repair the mischief as fast as it occurs—I found it years ago in Coleman's Nerve Pills.

You may be sceptical, but if you try a sample bottle, free of charge, your scepticism will vanish. Take my advice and make the test at once.

Yours truly, THE SPECIALIST.

THOUSANDS OF UNSOLICITED TESTIMONIALS. A PROFESSOR SAYS:

Prof. HENRY SNODIN (Trin. Coll. and International Coll.),
Voice Specialist and Musical Director,
18, Liverpool-street, Argyle-square, London, W.C.

Gentlemen.—Many thanks for the sample of Nerve Pills you kindly sent me. I have thoroughly tested them upon myself with the best result, as I can sleep and enjoy my meals better, and I am certainly stronger mentally and physically. I shall recommend them to my numerous friends and pupils. I may say the soothing effect your pills have upon an excited nervous system and brain is something marvellous. You can do whatever you please with this unsolicited testimonial, as I think this splendid remedy ought to reach the masses.

Believe me, Gentlemen, very faithfully,
HENRY SNODIN.

South Lambeth, Sept. 22nd, 1906.

Gentlemen.—I received the 2/6 bottle of Pills, and I am following your instructions, and I am happy to inform you that the improvement is fully maintained. In fact, I feel quite a different man; and, whereas before I took your inestimable medicine I was next door to a melancholic, I feel now quite light-hearted and jolly. I get through my work with ease, but before I used to shunt all I could till another day. I can assure you that I shall always keep some by me.

Yours truly,
JOHN HENRY.

SAMPLE BOTTLE SENT FREE

To obtain COLEMAN'S NERVE PILLS Free and Post Paid
SIGN THIS COUPON.

NAME
ADDRESS

"Pearson's Weekly," December 20th, 1906.
NOTE.—This Coupon, filled in, cut out, and posted to J. Chapman & Co. Ltd., Norwich, will bring you a free sample bottle of Nerve Pills containing £50 worth of nerve force gratis. After free trial you can obtain the pills of any chemist at 1/1½ or 2/0 per bottle.

TO BE ENERGETIC, HEALTHY, AND CHEERFUL
SEND THE COUPON FOR FREE SAMPLE TO J. CHAPMAN & CO. Ltd., NORWICH.

THINGS A
WOMAN WANTS
TO KNOW . . .

HOME NOTES PAGE.

CONDUCTED BY
ISOBEL . . .

HINTS FOR THE HOME.

To Fill up Unsightly Holes in a Wall.

MAKES a plaster of one part of plaster of Paris and three parts of fine sand. Mix with cold water, using a knife.

French Fried Potatoes.

Parboil some potatoes, drain them, then place in a stewpan with a bit of butter or dripping, and shake about constantly to prevent their burning.

To Clean Chiffon.

Soak for several hours in tepid water in which some borax is dissolved, rinse in clear water, then in slightly blue water. When half dry iron under muslin or the iron will tear the fabric. (Thanks to E. N.)

Grease Stains on Leather

May be removed by carefully applying benzine or perfectly pure turpentine. Wash the spots over afterwards with well-beaten white of an egg, or a good leather reviver. (Reply to L. J.)

To Clean Janned Ware.

Such as trays and coal boxes, use dry flour. Rub off the marks with a damp cloth, and dry very thoroughly. Then dredge rather thickly with flour, rub with clean cloths, and polish afterwards with chamois leather. (Reply to PORC.)

To Keep a Stilton Cheese.

Do not let the present of a Stilton cheese be a burden to you. Cut off half, or even a quarter, as you may require it. Spread over the cut part you wish to keep some buttered paper, wrap it in a cloth slightly moistened with vinegar, and keep in a covered earthen pan. (Reply to CHRISTMAS.)

Brilliantine

Is easily made at home if the necessary ingredients are to be had. Mix together two drachms of castor oil, six drachms of almond oil, one drachm of essence of bergamot or jockey club, and two drachms of rectified spirit. Shake thoroughly and it will be ready for use. (Reply to SAFIRE.)

To Cure Dandruff.

Wash the head once a week with this shampoo: Beat up the yolk of an egg with one pint of warm water and one ounce of rosemary spirit. Rub this thoroughly into the scalp and then rinse well. A little oil of almonds rubbed into the roots of the hair before the shampoo is used is often beneficial. Constant friction to the roots of the hair at night helps to keep the skin healthy and free of dandruff. (Reply to EVELYN.)

The Self-Raising Flour

You wish to make should be prepared as follows: Mix thoroughly five and a half ounces of tartaric acid with fifty-six pounds of flour; let it stand for three days, then add one pound of castor sugar, six ounces of bicarbonate of soda, and three-quarters of a pound of salt. Pass all through a large sieve. Each ingredient must be well dried and powdered before mixing. This flour must be made up with cold water or milk and baked immediately. The result will be light whole-some bread. (PEARL, Belfast.)

Waterproof Painting.

Take ordinary thick unbleached calico after sewing it to the shape required, adding for every two yards one handful of salt. Let this soak for twenty-four hours, then dry in the air and paint with the following: Three pounds of black, one pint of boiled linseed oil, half a pint of turpentine, half a pint of patent driers, two ounces of gold size, and one pint of raw linseed oil. Strain the calico, paint three coats, allowing to dry thoroughly between each coat. This is also suitable for oilcoats. The correspondent who gave me this recipe says he has had a coat in wear for three years that he treated as I describe.

A Novel Window Wedge

That will be found perfect in the strongest sale is made as follows: The gripping power of this home-made wedge will be found to be remarkable, and it will never get out of place. Get an old cork from a wine bottle, and from it cut circular pieces, the top portion being one-third of an inch thick. These should taper down to a fine edge, so that you obtain a wedge-shaped plug. Through the centre of this plug place a piece of knotted twine, the other end of which should be fastened to a drawing-pin. Fix the sharp point into the woodwork of the panels, and on retiring to rest place the cork plug between the frames. (Thanks to LOCKYER.)

FOR SMART OCCASIONS.

SOONER or later, the children will be sure to reel frocks of a less substantial nature than those they wear daily. Therefore our weekly sketch, on this occasion, takes the form of a pretty little dress (No. 16755) for a child of six to eight years of age.

Considering its smartness, it is surprising to learn that only three yards



No. 16755. Paper pattern, 61d., post free, from Pattern Department, Pearson's Buildings, Rensington Street, London, W.C.

narrower embroidery for the bodice. Crossway frills of the material would make a pretty substitute in both instances.

Don't make the mistake of cutting the short skirt along the selvedge. It will never hang really well, if you do. Crosswise, it will take two breadths, and the material must be so manoeuvred that both back and front are innocent of seams, these occurring at the sides.

THE RIGHT WAY TO SLEEP.

THE correct posture for sleep is to lie on the right side, with the limbs stretched out to their full length and the arms either straight down by the body or in any comfortable position, provided they are not raised above the head.

The mouth should be closed, and all the muscles of the body should be relaxed.

The lungs work with greater deliberation during the hours of sleep, and if the arms are raised above the head at this time, and for any period, the action of the heart drives the blood away from the arms and sends it to the head, frequently making one very restless when it does not prevent sleep entirely.

TABLE ETIQUETTE FOR CHILDREN.

GIVE the child a seat that shall be strictly his own.

Teach him to take his seat quietly.

To use his napkin properly.

To wait patiently to be served.

To answer promptly.

To say "thank you."

If asked to leave the table for a forgotten article or for any purpose, to do so at once.

Never to interrupt, and never to contradict.

Never to make remarks about the food, such as "I saw that turkey killed, and how he did bleed."

Teach the child to keep his plate in order.

To always say "Excuse me, please," when leaving the table before the rest of the party.

To fold his napkin and put back his chair or push it close to the table before leaving.

And after leaving the table not to return.

HOW TO KEEP SILVER BRIGHT.

WHEN filigree silver has become black and dull it may be cleaned by immersing it in a bath of potash water, not too strong, and washing it thoroughly; after which take it out and rinse it, and put it into the following solution: Salt, one part; alum, one part; saltpetre, two parts; water, four parts.

The ornament must be taken out after five minutes, and should then be rinsed in cold water, wiped dry, and polished with chamois leather.

Another way is to wash filigree silver in hot water, and go over it with a brush dipped in ammonia and green soap, then steep in boiling water and dry in sawdust.

Always put by filigree silver in tissue paper.

Plain silver trinkets can be cleaned by being rubbed with a slice of lemon, rinsed in cold water, washed in a lather of soap, and again rinsed, this time in hot water; dry and polish with chamois leather. Nickel silver may be kept bright by being rubbed with flannel dipped in ammonia.

HOLIDAYS FOR 1906-7.	DECEMBER.	1907. JAN.	FEBRUARY.
Christmas Day . . . December 25.	M 8 9 16 23 30	M 6 13 20 27	M 3 10 17 24
Boxing Day . . . December 26.	T 9 10 17 24 31	T 7 14 21 28	T 4 11 18 25
Good Friday . . . March 29.	T 4 11 18 25	T 1 8 15 22 29	T 5 12 19 26
Easter Monday . . . April 1.	W 5 12 19 26	W 2 9 16 23 30	W 6 13 20 27
Whitson Monday . . . May 20.	T 6 13 20 27	T 3 10 17 24 31	T 7 14 21 28
Bank Holiday . . . August 6.	F 7 14 21 28	F 4 11 18 25	F 8 15 22
	S 8 15 22 29	S 5 12 19 26	S 9 16 23

COOKERY BOOKS. ANCIENT AND MODERN.

How different are the cookery books of to-day from those published in the early decades of the eighteenth century. In those days a publisher introduced his adventure with much assumption of modesty. It is quaint, for instance, to read in the preface of a 1750 book: "There having already been a great number of publications concerning the Art of Cookery, it may perhaps be thought unnecessary to produce another book on the subject! Yet I trust that, upon examination, this book will appear of more real utility than may be at first imagined."

Shades of our Great Grandmothers! Forgive us that we are no longer content to trust that our cookery books will appear useful.

Modern Cookery Books do not always go in for appearances. But they help the housewife to keep up the appearance of her dinner and tea-table, by giving her ideas that are new, interesting, economical and practical.

Inside the very Cookery Book from whose ultra-modest preface we have just been quoting, we come across some injunctions which, to the modern housewife, would be not only impossible, but absolutely horrifying. One recipe for broth, for instance, having already directed the cutting up of a fowl, proceeds to discuss the killing and skinning of a viper!

We cannot help rejoicing that this antique compendium did not prove to everybody's satisfaction that there was no need for further publications on the Art of Cookery.

From such a Manual to the latest Little Cookery Book that has come into our hands, is indeed a far cry. We have before us a small volume, unpretentious in style and title, that has been written on purpose to help the housewife to prepare a greater variety of homely every-day currant dainties.

The book is, of course, the outcome of the general widespread demand for currant recipes. Its introduction deals brightly and clearly with "Currants," and recapitulates some most interesting facts regarding the food-values of this wonderful fruit. As for the formulae which occupy three-fourths of the pages, these are beyond praise.

The clever chef, who contributes the recipes, guarantees that each one, if followed close to directions, will be an assured success; and, so far as our experience carries us, the promise has been fulfilled to the letter.

"Currants: A Few Tasty Recipes" is not on sale, but grocers in all parts of the Kingdom have a supply on hand and will gladly present a copy to each customer making application.

We have pleasure in appending some recipes from this little booklet:

Boiled Currant Pudding.

1 lb. currants, 1 lb. beef suet finely chopped, 1 lb. flour, 1 pint milk, lemon, fresh butter or cream, sugar.

METHOD.—Mix all the dry ingredients in a basin, add the milk, and work into a fairly stiff dough. Put the mixture into a floured cloth, tie up and boil gently for 2½ hours. Serve with quarters of lemon, fresh butter or cream, and sugar (moist or castor).

Currant Suet Pudding.

4 oz. beef suet, 8 oz. flour, 2 oz. sugar, 2 oz. currants, 1 egg, 1 level teaspoonful baking powder, a pinch of salt.

METHOD.—Remove the skin from the suet and chop it very finely. Put it in a basin with the flour, sugar, currants, baking powder and salt. Beat up the egg with a little milk, and stir in. Work into a smooth paste, and fill into small, well-greased timbale or dariole moulds. Cover each with buttered paper, and steam for about an hour. Turn out and serve with a sweet sauce.

Rice and Currant Pudding.

2 oz. rice, 2 oz. currants, 1 pint milk, 1 egg, 1 tablespoonful castor sugar, ½ oz. beef suet, grated nutmeg to taste.

METHOD.—Wash, drain and blanch the rice, then drain again and cook it in the milk for 10 minutes, add the currants and the sugar. Shred the suet or chop it finely, and stir into the other ingredients. Beat up the egg and add also. Pour the mixture into a buttered pie dish. Grate a little nutmeg on top, and put the pudding in a slow oven to bake for about 1½ hours.

The more slowly farinaceous puddings are baked, the better the result will be.



This is the sixteenth Christmas Number of *Pearson's Weekly*. Those of my readers who have followed the progress of the paper from the first number—and I am happy to say there are many thousands of them—will agree with me that it is the best Christmas Double Number we have yet produced. The most prominent feature of the whole paper, naturally, is the colossal offer of a prize of £500 a Year for Life. It means that someone—perhaps YOU—will next Christmas be in the happy position of knowing that, so long as you live, you will never suffer the nerve-straining worry of wondering how things will be going with you during the ensuing years. One thing is certain. If you do not enter the competition you certainly won't win the prize. If you do enter the competition you will at least have an opportunity of winning it. Although the first half-dozen sets of pictures have already appeared, you can start the competition to-day by following the directions printed at the top of the competition page. If you have not already started, do so now. We wish you luck.

My colleague, the editor of *SMITH'S WEEKLY*, tells me that the Self-Help Club, just organised by that paper, is one of the biggest successes of the kind. The general idea is for readers to send in their names and addresses, and they will at once enjoy all the benefits derived from it. Local clubs are being formed all over the country, and are meeting with great success. If you feel that you would like to join this League, or to organise a local club of your own, you should write without delay to P. K., care of *SMITH'S WEEKLY*, 18 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

NATURALLY, there are a lot of Christmas questions at this time. NORAH asks, "Should a nice girl let herself be kissed beneath the mistletoe?" NORAH thinks it is a vulgar practice, and that young men should not follow it. Come now, NORAH, aren't you just a little too particular? We only get mistletoe once a year, and everybody is in capital spirits. Surely there's no great harm in snatching a kiss in these circumstances. Besides, you girls who object have got the remedy in your own hands—don't stand under the beautiful bough. But isn't it funny how often some girls have to wander slowly across the room when there is a lot of mistletoe hanging from the chandelier? Read the letters from well-known people on this subject on the first page of this number.

"THANK goodness," writes COMMON-SENSE, "I am not one of those ridiculous people who stuff up their children's heads with nonsense about Father Christmas, and make them hang up their stockings. I call it telling falsehoods." Thank goodness, COMMON-SENSE, you are compelled to confine your views to your own family. If you came trying to fill my little sons' heads with your silly notions I should let loose the fighting editor. We are only young men, COMMON-SENSE, and we only get real innocent enjoyment out of life when we are little children. All too soon we have to learn that Father Christmas doesn't exist, and that Jones only invites us to his party because Mrs. Jones wants an invitation to ours. Don't make the little ones wise before their time. You'll never have such a thrill of pleasure again in your life as you had on that dark, cold Christmas morning years ago when you groped along the bed and felt the well-filled stocking. Don't deny the same thrill to your kiddies.

MORE mistletoe misery. This time it is GEORGE. GEORGE is engaged to a very beautiful young lady, and this Christmas they will go to a lot of parties together. GEORGE dreads the idea. "This wretched mistletoe will be about the place," he says, "and am I to stand by and see my fiancée kissed by every Tom, Dick, and Harry? I have spoken to her, and she says it is ridiculous to make a fuss about it. She says that kissing under the mistletoe means nothing, and that she is not going to object." In a case like this my sympathies are with GEORGE. I certainly think that no young lady who is engaged should allow herself to be kissed by any other man. She owes that much to her fiancé, and she ought to owe it to herself, if she has proper self-respect. However, GEORGE's path is clear. Every time another girl—not his sweetheart—comes under the bough, he should be the first to dash at her and claim his right. That will soon bring his fiancée to her senses.

"EATING plum-pudding nearly always upsets me dreadfully," says DYSPEPTIC. "But some years it has no ill-effect at all. Please tell me (1) how I can find out if it will agree with me this year; (2) what to do for it if it is likely to hurt me." (1) Eat a great big chunk. (2) Don't eat any more. And the next article, DYSPEPTIC?

"HAVE you noticed," writes EARLY, "that when you oversleep yourself in the morning you are sure to break a boot-lace, or your collar won't button, or you cut yourself while shaving—in fact, everything seems to take longer than it would if you had risen at the proper time? Why is this?"

The reason is pretty obvious. It is a case of spoiling things by rushing them. If you allow yourself half an hour to dress in the morning, you do so in a more or less leisurely way, and everything runs smoothly. If you allow yourself twenty minutes, you have to cram thirty minutes' work into that time, and the result is that your methods of doing it have to be accelerated. Your razor works a little more rapidly than you are accustomed to, and then you get a nasty red streak on your cheek. You lace up your boots in double quick time, and an extra wrench breaks the lace. You fuss about hurriedly with your collar, and take twice as long to fasten it. The moral of it all is, my dear EARLY: Don't oversleep yourself.

G. C. C. comes forward with a woman's grievance. "Don't you think it a shame," she writes, "that a woman should have to put her hair up? When it is a pretty colour, and silky, with a nice wave in it, don't you think it is a pity to hide it?"

When the hair is as you describe it, G. C. C., and when the possessor is girlish and pretty, perhaps it is a pity. But what about those of your sex whose hair is lank and dull? Coiled up on their heads, with perhaps the addition of 7s. 6d. worth from the hair-dresser, it looks bewitching; would they like it to hang loose, do you suppose? More important is the consideration that we do not live a wild, free life on the glorious moor lands, where a woman's flowing hair, fluttering in the breeze, would be a beautiful sight. We have to go about in dirty towns, where the more of one's person we can keep covered the better. And imagine "streaming tresses" on top of a 'bus. Think of the unhappy man sitting behind in a high wind. Do you suppose he'd care tuppence whether the stuff that was blinding and choking him had a nice silky wave in it? Remember what the songs says, G. C. C., "My mother bids me bind my hair." That mother knew what she was talking about.

THE question that frequently arises about this time of year is raised by FRED, of Dunstable. He says that last spring he was married, and this is his first Christmas "in harness." Naturally enough, his own parents wish the young couple to spend Christmas Day with them; and, naturally enough also, his wife's parents have expressed the same wish. Up till last Christmas he always spent his Christmas Day at home, and if he is not there on December 25th this year his old parents will naturally be very much cut up. On the other hand, his wife produces exactly the same arguments, and there is a deadlock. He appeals to me to find a way out of the difficulty. I quite admit that when it comes to a matter of sentiment the dear old folk are very unreasonable. But you must, of course, do your best to please each set of parents. If their respective homes are no great distance from yours you could spend Christmas Day with your own family, and Boxing Day with your wife's; while, next year, you could reverse the order. After all, the chief object is to get all members of a family around the table at Yule tide, and whether this is Christmas Day or Boxing Day does not seem to me to make very much difference under such circumstances as those you mention. Why not put this suggestion to the old people and see what they have to say?

HERE is a point of moral responsibility for those readers who are interested in that sort of thing. W. W. writes: "Yesterday when I was travelling by rail to Dublin, just before the train stopped at the station at which the tickets are examined and collected before reaching Dublin, a man in our compartment got under the seat. Besides myself there were two ladies and a gentleman; the latter was a stranger. Now, I have been turning over in my mind if I was wise in not pointing the man out who was under the seat, even though the other occupants, whose dresses hid him, failed to do so, but who were annoyed. I have heard of Dan Leno when young and poor doing something similar. I know it is not right to defraud the railway company in this way, but I question if it was not the duty of the ticket collector, and not my business. Other people are divided if under the circumstances I did right or wrong in the matter. What do you think?" Under the circumstances you did right not to interfere. I remember a case of one man who called the attention of a ticket inspector to a fellow passenger who had crept under the seat on nearing the ticket

collecting station, and when the culprit was hauled out he produced a properly dated ticket, much to the discomfiture of the informant. He became very high and mighty, and asked the collector if any of the company's bye-laws prohibited him from travelling under the seat instead of on it if he chose to do so. The same sort of thing might happen to you if you interfered in the way in which your conscience led you to feel you ought to. You see, you don't know that the man hasn't a ticket because he rides under the seat, any more than you know he has one if he sits on it.

F. D. has been officiously interfering with his brother's love affairs, with disastrous results. He says: "My brother fell in love with a young lady he used to meet in the street. He tried for months to get an introduction to her, and then took me into his confidence. I found out that she was not engaged, and suggested he should write to her. He did so, asking her to marry him, and inclosing a stamped, addressed envelope. He received no answer. So when he met her one morning he introduced himself and asked for an explanation. She would not listen to him, but told him she had torn up his letter, and was already engaged to be married. Don't you think that she ought to have returned an answer to him, and that she has treated him very badly?"

On the other hand, I think that the girl has been subjected to a great amount of unpleasantness. In the first place, the information which you found out about her engagement was wrong, and, in the second place, you had no right to advise your brother to send her a written proposal, adding insult to injury by inclosing a stamped, addressed envelope for her reply. Further, your brother, never having been introduced to the lady, was distinctly wrong in stopping her in the street and referring to such a delicate matter. Altogether you seem to have muddled up the whole business. Leave other people's love affairs alone in future, my friend.

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